PATHWAY TO GOD IN THE VEDAS

K. D. SANGORAM

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B. R. KULKARNI
EDITOR

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Editor's Note

Cloistered in a solitary house at Athani, a tiny town in a remote corner of Karnatak, Shri K.D. Sangoram (29.12.1897 — 29.11.1983), drowned himself in the exploration of the Vedas. His Vedic studies date back to his early college days. An erudite Sanskrit scholar, he was a deeply religious soul. He ardently advocated that though the Vedic treasure was an Indian heritage, it should not remain an exclusive property of Indians, but should hold a torch for all humanity. He entertained a keen desire to place before the scholarly world the mystical message of our ancient seers by tracing a Pathway to God as reflected in the Vedas. The Vedic Mantra combines style with substance, and music with meaning. Shri Sangoram selected hymns from the holy texts and classified them under suitable heads. In this, he closely followed the method adopted by Professor R.D. Ranade, the great philosopher-saint for whom he cherished high reverence. Shri Sangoram had a passion for excellence and perfection. He 'sought no relaxation from the never-hasting, never-resting work'. His rumination went on continuously; but it did not perhaps reach his idea of perfection. Years rolled by. Yet the actual composition of the English volume did not commence. His brother-disciple, Shri M.S. Deshpande, was constantly goading him to start the transcription. But the work was not destined to be handled by him. Shri Sangoram's various pre-occupations in social, educational and cultural fields and his indifferent health just did not allow him to begin the work. Fearing that the valuable material would remain on the shelves for indefinite time, Shri Deshpande urged him to hand over the Vedic selections to me for writing the English exposition. Thus the source material came to me. The blue-print along with the bricks was at hand. My work was to lay brick to brick and shape the material into an edifice. The design to be adopted was psychology and philosophy of religion. Parallels from Western philosophy were to be drawn for the purpose. That is why Socrates and Plato, Descartes and Kant, James and Taylor appear in the present narration.

Shri Sangoram gladly and promptly supplied whatever clarification was sought. In a short time a major portion of the final draft was ready. He carefully went through it. Bhavan's Journal, Bombay, came forward to serialise the work. Letters of appreciation flowed from the readers and Shri Sangoram was overwhelmed. Efforts to complete the work re-doubled. Only a few pages of the English exposition remained to be read by him. Thereafter all the ten chapters were to be polished and the Press Copy

prepared. In September 1983, when I had been to Athani to discuss a few points regarding the proposed publication, Shri Sangoram promised that he would stay with me in Bombay for some time to finalise all the chapters. But at this crucial time, all of a sudden, death snatched him away. He was hale and hearty on the fateful morning of 29th November, 1983. At about 11.30 A.M. he went out to post a letter and returned — slightly exhausted. He felt uneasy. A doctor administered some medicine and assured to be back after a while. Minutes ticked away. A slight gurgling in the throat, a spasm of cough and then — the eternal sleep from which there is no waking.

The swift march of the writing work came to a grinding halt. Undreampt of difficulties from unexpected quarters cropped up in the way of completion and publication of the volume. More than a decade passed and the work began to gather dust. But Nature repairs the ravages wrought by time and circumstances. It was in January 1995 that hurdles were removed and the work put on the rails again. It gathered momentum with the unstinted cooperation of Shri Sangoram's admirers. The first instalment of the MS was sent to the Press on Yugadi — the Hindu New Year Day.

Shri Sangoram's was a unique personality. He was closely associated with a number of public charitable Bodies. He would burn midnight oil carefully scrutinising financial matters just like Saint Ekanath who kept awake a whole night to locate a mistake of a farthing in the public accounts. Trust money was a sacred cow to Shri Sangoram, and he firmly held that the custodians had a special responsibility to see that not a pie was misspent. An alert honesty is the price of becoming a member of a Public Trust, he maintained. Shri Sangoram was generous to the core. When ruined spendthrifts hanged on him with their tales of woe, he hastened to their succour. Like Oliver Goldsmith's Village Parson, Sangoram's pity gave ere charity began. Moreover, though he relieved their pain, he never chided their vagrant wanderings. He was often reminded by his friends that he was cheated to the tune of a few thousands or that some one had inflicted an unkindest cut on him; but he would only smile and despatch peoples' ingratitude with just a gentle wave of his hand. It appeared as though he 'forgot their vices in their woe'. His selfless service was a shining example of Niṣkāma-karma taught in the Bhagavad-gītā. In the early sixties, a village party of amateurish musicians came to the Nimbal Ashram during a religious festival. Shri Sangoram was one of the main pillars of the Ashram. The unskilled artists insisted that their performance be included in the celebration-schedule. It was an ill-organised and rustic-mannered group.

Then began the drab singing accompanied by a novice on the Tabla and the village maestro with ill-tuned cymbal. Members of the audience left the scene one by one. But Shri Sangoram sat the whole night and listened with rapt attention to their big, booming, buzzing confusion couched in stentorious tones. Occasionally his appreciation would come out in the form of 'Well done', 'Wonderful'. Later he observed: "What is important in the performance of the simple village folk is not music but the fervent devotion or Bhāva with which they are imbued".

Shri Sangoram combined in himself rare gifts of energy, intelligence and wisdom. His nature, however, was always to remain in the background. He worked, but silently; he gave in charity, but his left hand knew not what his right hand had given. He meditated for long hours, but never made an exhibition of it. He had no complaint against any one or any thing. He was very polite and always had a smiling demeanour. It was a pleasure to work in his quiet and dignified presence. Unruffled in the midst of calamities (which were not a few in his eventful life), he exuded robust optimism and cheerfulness. His outer calmness was a replica of his deep, inner stillness. He was a versatile scholar well-versed in Law, Literature or Astrology. A connoisseur of music, he was also endowed with a melodious voice. It was indeed a treat to listen to his musical renderings of the songs of Jñāneśvara or Tukārāma, Kabir or Tulsidāsa, Purandaradāsa or Sarpabhūṣaṇa Śivayogi. It is reported that in his college-days he acted in dramas only to win laurels. He had also made a name as a good cricketeer.

He was singularly cast to be a researcher and went from village to village and from house to house to get a shred of paper relating to persons or places of the Nimbargi spiritual school to which he belonged. He had preserved valuable documents that are an authoritative source-material for the history of his Sampradāya. With his colossal memory, he used to hum the Vedic Sūktas with proper accents. He pointed out verses which had a definite spiritual import. Richness and maturity of thought combined with profound religious experience, make his writings highly weighty.

He had left his legal practice — where he shone with unparalleled grace — early in the day and took to God-devotion and philanthropic work. Preservation of holy relics and articles, construction or repair of temples, publication of philosophical and religious books, running and financing of charitable institutions or starting of schools and colleges, are some of the areas where he has left his indelible imprint. No one cared more, no one helped more, no one toiled more, no one sacrificed more and no one suffered more than Shri K.D. Sangoram for the furtherance of the sacred cause for which his mentor, Gurudev R. D. Ranade stood.

Shri Sangoram took Ṛgveda as the basis for his selections and specified with minute details how a particular Mantra appeared in other Vedas with a little variation. A single word was sufficient for him to revive these parallels. For example, he jotted down notes like this: "The Ṛgveda Mantra X.141.4 is the same as Yajurveda XXXIII.86 and Atharvaveda III.20.6 with some variations. Yajurveda makes two changes: For the word बृहस्पतिम् in the Ṛgveda, it substitutes सुसंदृशा and for the word संगत्याम् it puts in two words अनमीवः and संगमे. Atharvaveda also effects two changes: instead of बृहस्पतिम् it uses the expression उभाविह and at the end of the Mantras, it adds the phrase दानकामश्च नो भुवत्." The Brāhmaṇas, the Āraṇyakas, the Upaniṣads, the Bhagavad-gītā and the Vedānta-sūtras were combed by Shri Sangoram. Śaunaka's Ṛgvidhāna or his Bṛhaddevaṭā, Yāska's Nirukta, commentaries on Vedic compositions by Uvaṭācārya, Mahīdharācārya or Bhaṭṭabhāskara were consulted. Shri Sangoram had studied Sāyaṇa's commentary on the Vedas and has frequently quoted from it. There are many references to Madhva's Ṛgbhaṣya. The Mahābhārata and the Bhāgavata found a place of honour in his reading material. He had a mastery over Svatmarāma Swāmin's Haṭhayoga-pradīpikā. He supplemented his knowledge of Yogic physiology by a study of Caraka's Aṣṭāṅga-hṛdaya. Ācāryas of the Vedānta school make their appearance in his notes. In a word, he scanned the whole of traditional literature thoroughly. So far about collection of Sanskrit sources.

Then followed the equally mighty task of translation and interpretation. Shri Sangoram was a voracious reader and knew Kannada, Marathi, English, Sanskrit and Hindi. He enriched his Vedic scholarship by roaming through the vast territory of treatises on the Vedas in these languages. Some of the Vedic scholars he studied are mentioned below language-wise.

English : V.S. Agarwal, Shiva Dayal Arya, Aurobindo, A.C. Bose, Devi Chand, Ralph T.H. Griffith, T.V. Kapali Shastri, C. Kunhan Raja, Ludwig, Gopalacharya, A.B. Purani, M.P. Pandit, Sampurnananda, H.P. Venkat Rao and H.H. Wilson.

Marathi : Bapat Shastri, Sadashiv Shastri Bhide, Siddheshwar Shastri Chitrav, R.G. Kolangade, Bhau Shastri Lele, Ramachandra Vinayak Patwardhan, S.D. Satavalekar and Tulzapurkar.

Kannada : Anantarangachar, Chakravarti and Laxman Babani Pai.

Hindi : Abhaya Dev Vidyalankar, Bhagavadacharya, Mangal Dev Shastri, Ram Govind Trivedi and Virendra Shastri.

Swami Dayananda's works were equally important to him. Even stray articles on the Vedas appearing in periodicals like Brahma Vidya, Prabuddha Bharata, Vedic Light, Bhavan's Journal, Purushartha, Vaidika Dharma, Jana Jnana, Hindu Vishva or Prasad did not escape his alert eye. Annual numbers like Yoganka, Dharmanka, Sadhananka, Bhagavannamanka or the Cultural Heritage of India Series, provided grist for his reading mill. He had a catholic out-look and cherised great love for the Bible. We find in his notes quotations from St. Matthew, St. John, The Acts or the Romans of the New Testament.

Shri Sangoram perused a number of translations of the Vedic Mantras but in most cases, gave his own rendering. Every interpreter of a Vedic Mantra was dear to him; but Truth was dearer still; and so he always looked for corroborative evidence for any interpretation.

I consider it as one of my good fortunes to bring to light Shri Sangoram's valuable work. Both the author and his silent research spread over half a century remained away from lime-light. The work of English exposition was undertaken as a labour of love. The responsibility of publication is cherished as an humble tribute to the memory of a noble soul.

Thanks are due to Shri Surendra Sangoram, son of Shri K.D. Sangoram, for giving permission to publish the work. Dr. P.G. Lalye, Pune, Dr. G.B. Palsule Pune, Dr. R.L. Joshi, Solapur, Dr. Mrs. Shailaja Karandikar, Pune, have laid me under great obligation by providing references and explaining knotty problems, whether grammatical or philological. Authorities of Delhi University, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bombay, Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts, New Delhi, Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Pune, D.A.V. College, Solapur, gave me free access to their reference sections. Dr. S.G. Kulkarni, Hyderabad University, provided documentation of passages quoted in the text. I am grateful to Shri V.G. Nitsure, Bijapur, who made a clean and neat Press Copy and to Shri S.D. Shintre, Solapur, for typing and re-typing the chapters at various stages. Shri N.S. Kulkarni, Solapur and Smt. Pushpa Nakhate, Solapur, volunteered to write out the Sanskrit sources. Shri S.K. Joshi, Solapur, verified the typescript. Sou. Sunanda Shintre, Solapur, checked the Sanskrit sources. Dr. A.D. Kulkarni, Bijapur and Shri A.V. Jog, Solapur, helped me out from many a difficult situation. Shri V.R. Kotbagi, Belgaum, always encouraged me with the words : 'Not merely fare-well, but also fare forward'. Credit for the attractive cover-page, goes to Sou. Sushama Agnihotri, Pune. Shri M.R. Gokhale, New Delhi, was kind

enough to arrange for printing paper at a concessional rate. The elegence of the book is due to the untiring efforts of Shri Randhir Singh Rohilla of Excellent Laser Typesetters, Delhi and to Shri Jai Bhagawan of Quality Enterprises, Delhi.

The loss of Shri K.D. Sangoram, Shri M.S. Deshpande, Dr. Mrs. Shailaja Karandikar and Shri V.R. Kotbagi who would have loved to see the completion of the work, fills me with a poignant feeling.

Solapur
Gītā Jayantī,
2.12.1995

B.R. Kulkarni

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Introduction

The Vedas constitute the original source of philosophy and religion of India, the *fons et origo* of its culture. The very ethos of India is based upon the Vedic sanctions; its customs and traditions, its very way of life, its histories and mythologies are nothing but an exfoliation of Vedic roots. Its systems of philosophy, in order to be authoritative, must be in consonance with the Vedic teachings. We should never forget that the Vedas containing the oldest culture of the world have provided to us a vantage ground from which we can look at the later civilizations and understand them.

We find in the Vedas the thrill of poetry, theology and emotion as well as coolness of reasoning. The message which was already laden with meaning developed musical wings in the Sāmaveda. Lokmanya Tilak while commenting on the Gītā-expression वेदानां सामवेदोऽस्मि says that the greatness of the Sāmaveda lies in its musical quality. In the path of devotion, the singing of the praises of the Lord occupies a very high place and Sāmaveda had in a way fostered Bhakti by putting Ṛgveda Mantras to tune. The Bhagavad-gītā being the foremost exponent of Bhakti, it is no wonder that it selected Sāmaveda as a manifestation (Vibhūti) of God.

The Vedic seers had an unparalleled aesthetic sense; with a keen eye on beauty they have given us some of the finest descriptions of nature. Their whole life was spent on the lap of nature which for them was a living force. The communion between man and nature is an evidence of their exalted sensibility. Rudolf Otto would say that this heightened sensibility of the experience of beauty or sublimity is the schema of the experience of the Numen, meaning thereby that the former would arouse the latter and that in the deeply felt aesthetic experience, we have the nearest analogue to the spiritual experience. We notice in these sacred texts a distinct heliotropism, the craving for light, both physical and spiritual. References to Jyoti, Swarṇa-Jyoti, Bhā, Teja or Sūrya are strewn liberally.

For the Vedic Ṛṣis nature was full of benevolent deities to whom they prayed again and again and prayed superbly. Hamlet-wise, we may say that the prayer is the thing in which they wanted to catch the grace of the deities. The Vedas express loftiest sentiments that man can feel for his deity. We may take one example, that of Agni, the Fire-god. Agni is the intermediary between man and God. In this he discharges a schematic function by interpreting the devotee to God and God to the devotee. Agni is Janus-faced

with one face turned towards God and the other towards man. It is interesting to note that Agni is actually described as having two heads (द्वे शीर्षे) in Ṛgveda (IV.58.3). He invites gods to the sacrifices performed by men, carries oblations offered by men to gods and brings back their blessings to men in turn. He is the giver of heat and light. He bestows light of knowledge which destroys the darkness of ignorance. Agni thus becomes the purifier, the sanctifier and the ultimate benefactor. He is the preceptor, protector, warm friend and supreme shelter.

There is an unbroken continuity in the movement of Indian thought especially in the realm of philosophical and spiritual pursuit. The Gītā expression, शिष्यस्तेऽहं शाधि मां त्वां प्रपन्नम् (II.7), where the disciple is imploring his teacher to impart knowledge to him can well be traced back to Ṛgveda expression शिक्ष सु अपत्यस्य शिक्षोः (III.19.3) (enlighten this sincere child of yours). There is also ideological similarity between Vedic teachings and ideas developed in later eras. The Vedas talk of the river of existence coming to an end at the bund (Setu) of God.

त्वं नो अग्न आयुषु त्वं देवेषु पूर्व्य वस्व एक इरज्यसि।
त्वामापः परिस्रुतः परि यंति स्वसेतवो नभंतामन्यके समे।। (Rgveda VIII.39.10)

The concept of Setu or bund is used by the Vedānta-sūtra to indicate God — परमतः सेतून्मानसंबंधभेदव्यपदेशेभ्यः (III.2.31). We may also note that the idea of Jīvanmukti or liberation here and now (इह) is first enunciated in the Taittirīya Āraṇyaka (III.12.16), where we have the celebrated expression विद्वान् अमृतः इह भवति (the enlightened one becomes immortal in this very life).

The experience of divine lustre which we find in the Bhagavad-gītā, "If the light of a thousand suns were to burst forth all at once in the sky, it would be like a splendour of that mighty one" (XI.12), is a re-echo of what Puruhanman Āngirasa said :

यद्द्याव इन्द्र ते शतं शतं भूमीरुत स्युः।
न त्वा वज्रिन् त्सहस्रं सूर्या अनु न जातमष्ट रोदसी।। (Ṛgveda VIII.70.5)

Or again, when Jñāneśvara describes the supersensuous experience, "the blind man is able to see, the deaf man is able to hear and the lame man is able to go in pursuit", he is confirming the same Vedic Truth: You enabled the blind to see and the lame one to walk:

अनु द्वा जहिता नयोऽन्धं श्रोणं च वृत्रहन्।
न तत् ते सुम्नमष्टवे।। (Ṛgveda IV.30.19)

Though mighty in volume and mightier in value, the Vedas have unfortunately met with mightiest negligence. We vainly say that ours is a Vedic civilization, but we shudder to study the Vedas. It is as though we have developed a kind of Vedo-phobia resulting in an unconscious fear of approaching them. And if anyone utters the name of Sāyaṇabhāṣya, we flee from the scene as if chased by terror. This is a perfect example of Gauḍapāda's remark, अभये भयदर्शिनः (they apprehend fear where there is fearlessness). In fact, Sāyaṇabhāṣya elucidates the meaning of a Vedic Mantra in so simple a fashion that any one who has a preliminary acquaintance with Sanskrit can follow him. Another misunderstanding is regarding the nature of Atharvaveda which is more misunderstood than understood. Besides sharing the censure on other Vedas, that they prescribe meaningless rituals, and sing superfluous eulogies addressed to heavenly office-bearers, the Atharva has become a victim of another charge. It is taken to be synonymous with sorcery, witch-craft or black-magic. The Atharvaveda may contain these elements, no doubt, but it also embodies sublime spiritual experiences in no way inferior to those described in Ṛgveda. An example or two from Atharvaveda may be cited.

अकामो धीरो अमृतः स्वयंभू रसेन तृप्तो न कुतश्चनोनः।

तमेव विद्वान्न बिभाय मृत्योरात्मानं धीरमजरं युवानम्।। (X.8.44)

(Desireless, serene, immortal, self-existent, lacking nothing ... is He the Atman. On realising the Atman who is serene, undecaying and ever youthful, one has no fear of death). Look again. Ṛṣi Atharvan exclaims:

मुग्धा देवा उत शुनायजंतोत गोरंगैः पुरुधायजंत।

य इमं यज्ञं मनसा चिकेत प्र णो वोचस्तमिहेह ब्रवः।। (VII.5.5)

(The ignorant sacrifice by offering a dog, others do it by offering cows. He who sacrifices his mind to God is alone praiseworthy).

It is wrong to see only crass materialism in the Vedas. We would be doing injustice to the lofty message if we understand the words literally instead of grasping the inner meaning. We have to break the shell of words to partake of the kernel of real significance. Hence the necessity of symbolic interpretation. However, a word of caution is needed. We cannot say that we have understood the whole of Vedic symbolism. Nonetheless, the petitional prayers in the Vedas apparently seeking material comforts may have a spiritual import. A discerning eye can trace in the Vedas the prototype of spiritual life. Take the Vedic institution of Yajña. The root 'Yaj' means to worship, and as meditation is the sole essence of worship, Yajña may well stand for meditation. Like-wise the word Dyu (heaven) may

symbolise cranium or head or Brahmarandhra of Yogic physiology; Antarikṣa or Antarāḷa (intermediate space) may be taken as heart; Pṛthvī or earth may mean lower portion of the body.

Coming to Soma, another victim of misunderstanding, it may be pointed out that Soma does not necessarily mean the intoxicating liquor. It is ambrosial juice which a mystic, rapt in meditation, partakes of. It is Amṛtarasa or Rāmarasa in which terms the saints express their flavour experience. We may consider a Mantra from Ṛgveda. Sāvitrī Sūryā Ṛṣikā declares :

आच्छद्विधानैर्गुपितो बार्हतैः सोम रक्षितः।
ग्राव्णामिन् शृण्वन् तिष्ठसि न ते अश्नाति पार्थिवः।। (Ṛgveda X.85.4)

(Sheltered by protective rules and guarded by singers of Bṛhat Sāma, you stand as if listening to the music of press-stones. Never can an earthly being partake of thee). The expression न ते अश्नाति पार्थिवः (no earthly being partakes of the juice) clearly indicates that Soma is not the herbal intoxicant but the divine juice which oozes at the height of intense meditation. The same idea that no one who dwells on earth tastes Soma is repeated in Yajurveda: "You, Oh Soma, are the accomplisher of sacrifice. Through you we have attained the light eternal and have become immortal. From earthly existence we have risen to the state of illumination; we have realised the gods and also the self-effulgent light" (VIII.52).

It is worth noting (a) how the Vedic Ṛṣis displayed an insight into the working of human mind or (b) how they could foreshadow very important concepts accepted by later-day ethical thought.

(a) We see clearly from a Mantra that the sages were aware of the process of re-channelising mind's energy, which process is known in modern psychology as sublimation. They had understood that the assistance of mind is needed in all that we do. It being the nature of the mind to go the way of the senses, the Ṛṣis wanted to redirect its powers Godward. In other words the mind is normally ego-centric; it entertains ideas which please the empirical self or the Jīvātman. But the Vedic sages wanted the mind to become God-centred. It should meditate on the idea of the Almighty. The Vedas have used a very significant term, Śivasamkalpa, to convey this shift in the attitude of the mind. May the mind be Śivasamkalpa or God-oriented. We may use a term Jīvasamkalpa on the analogy of the Vedic term Śivasamkalpa and say that the mind is expected to abandon its usual nature of self-centredness, Jīvasamkalpa and attach itself to God – Śivasamkalpa. This is the sum and substance of the

Śivasamkalpa Mantras in Yajurveda (XXXIV.1-6). The words तन्मे मनः शिवसंकल्पमस्तु reverberate like music in the ears reminding us that the powers of the mind need to be sublimated. The ancient thinkers might not have conducted any research in a systematic or scientific way; but it is certain that by their keen observation they had concluded that all improvement of the society and the world started with the purification of one's own mind.

(b) Another modern concept found in the Vedas is that of moral autonomy. It is contended, and rightly so, by ethical writers that in order to be held responsible for his actions the agent must be free. If the moral command has an external source, the doer of an action will not remain free, and hence the importance of moral autonomy. Here is a Mantra from Ṛgveda:

परिचिन्मर्तो द्रविणं ममन्यात् ऋतस्य पथा नमसा विवासेत्।
उत स्वेन क्रतुना सं वदेत श्रेयासं दक्षं मनसा जगृभ्यात्।। (X.31.2)

It prescribes that a man may think about wealth and strive to acquire it by adhering to the path of eternal moral law and by humble devotion to God. In this respect he should consult his own conscience and stick firmly to his best judgement. We have here the sanest advice to be followed in mundane life. One is not dissuaded from acquiring wealth; but one is exhorted to acquire it by right means. And who is to determine the right means? The Mantra says: one has to (i) consult one's conscience स्वेन क्रतुना सं वदेत and (ii) stick to its best judgement श्रेयांसं दक्षं मनसा जगृभ्यात्। Here the Vedic Ṛṣi has anticipated Kant, one of the greatest moral philosophers of all times. In Kant, the moral law is self-imposed; the self is the author of the moral law. This is the principle of autonomy as opposed to heteronomy where the law is imposed by an out-sider. Kant had thought that no earlier moral system had taken note of this principle of autonomy. Had Kant read the words, स्वेन क्रतुना सं वदेत in the above Mantra he would have at once realised that in the Vedas is found the doctrine of autonomy in clearest terms. The second point in the Mantra is that moral guidance should be taken from our own best judgement, श्रेयांसं दक्षं मनसा. This idea too is found in Kant in a fully developed form. Śreyas is the idea of the good as contrasted with Preyas which is the idea of the pleasant. Incidentally, a contrast between Preyas and Śreyas was later made famous by Kaṭhopaniṣad. The Vedic Mantra under discussion speaks neither of the word Preyas nor of the contrast. In Śreyas there is obedience to the moral law and no indulgence in passions. Now, the Vedic concept of Śreyas is on a par with Kantian concept of reason. In Kant reason unwaveringly obeys

the moral law because it is bereft of passions and impulses. He further says that those actions alone are moral where reason is the motive; thus reason becomes the real moral guide. According to the Vedas man has to consult his own mind and the mind must be alert to the moral end श्रेयांसं दक्षं, so that it gives the best judgement. And in Kant man's reason itself gives the moral law and the same reason constituting the moral end gives the best judgement. To the moral universe, or Kingdom of Ends, "every rational being belongs as a member, who, though universally legislative, is yet submitted to the laws he enacts."[1] Thus the Vedic Mantra, formulated centuries before Kant, enunciates one of the central doctrines of moral philosophy.

With all this theoretical insight the Vedic people were never indifferent to the worldly life. The whole attitude to life was characterised by a robust optimism, persistent vitalism and practical realism. They would never stand morbid melancholy and groundless fear, and were completely free from gloomy forebodings. What we see in the present day world strikes a contrast. Modern industrial civilization (with all due respect to its utilitarian side) has, one must admit, squeezed out of man all enthusiasm; and what remains is bare skin. Nowhere do we find today that bubbling enthusiasm, that irrepressible zest for life which we find depicted in many a Mantra. "Shed your idleness, shed lethargy; be up and doing, because the gods do not like him who sleeps in idleness":

इच्छन्ति देवाः सुन्वन्तं न स्वप्नाय स्पृहयन्ति।
यन्ति प्रमादमतन्द्राः।। (Ṛgveda VII.2.18)

That society, said Vivekananda, is the highest, where the highest truth becomes practical. In Vedic times attainment of God was not merely theoretically prescribed; spirituality was the way of life and what was to be attained had become incumbent on every one to attain. To those who have no motivation and hence no energy to work, Ṛṣi Kāśyapa Asita gives a significant directive :

अनु प्रत्लास आयवः पदं नवीयो अक्रमुः।
रुचे जनन्त सूर्यम्।। (Ṛgveda IX.23.2)

(Go in search of the sun, and in case you do not find him, create one). What a bold advice! The implication is that one has to go in search of new ground and should not offer idle excuses. Take another verse : "awake, arise; this life-giving Prāṇa has arrived. Darkness has vanished..." (Ṛgveda 1.113.16).

1 The Critique of Pure Reason, Tr. N.K. Smith, Macmillan, St. Martin's Press, 1970, R. VIII.62

The Message is definite and forceful. Yet one lyric exhorts men to cross over the river which is full of stones, अश्मन्वती रीयते सं रभध्वम् (Ṛgveda X.53.8). Difficulties in crossing are admitted; still a beneficent and blissful ideal of spiritual wealth is held before men.

Making offerings to the deities, asking them for good things in life and enjoying them fully without any trace of dissatisfaction with the present life and without a tinge of pessimism are important aspects of the mental make-up of the Vedic people. They had a faith in the positivity of life and therefore had no inhibitions in sharing in the common joys of life. They addressed prayers to deities for cows, for wealth and for progeny. This is a fascinating example of healthy-mindedness both in their simple pastoral life as well as in their high spiritual pursuit. In fact, they made no hard and fast distinction between secular and religious matters. The technical distinction between Abhyudaya and Niḥśreyas was yet to be effected. They looked on all duties as religious. Really speaking religious spirit in duty implies faith, sincerity and dedication. But as we have forgotten these implications we tend to make the word religious an anathema. The ancient people were aware that sundering the religious from the secular is bound to degrade both; for then, the secular duties would only come to be performed in a most neglected fashion and religious duties would be done, only with an impoverished spirit.[1] Their practice was to perform even social duties as religious thus preserving earnestness and seriousness. Whatever was inconsistent with spiritual life could not be acceptable even in secular life. This created a healthy atmosphere for virtues like humility, selflessness, sympathy or service to take root. In short, they pursued an ideal of universal harmony without a discordant note, 'a cosmical republic governed by a law of harmony'. More important is the sense of gratitude they feel for the higher powers for their awards. They profusely express their gratefulness through a number of weighty prayers.

तच्चक्षुः देवहितं पुरस्तात् शुक्रमुच्चरत्।

पश्येम शरदः शतं जीवेम शरदः शतम्।। (Yajurveda XXXVI.24)

(That eye, the gracious gift of God, has appeared before us. May we be blessed to enjoy this vision for a hundred years).

The Vedic thinkers are the pioneers in giving to posterity the lofty concepts of one God, one World and one Humanity. Ṛgveda I.164.46 gives the concept of one God, as it says: Reality is one, though the wise speak

1 A.E. Taylor, The Faith of a Moralist, Series I, Macmillan and Co. Ltd., St. Martin's Street, London, 1932, Pp 341 ff

of it variously: एकं सत् विप्रा बहुधा वदन्ति। Then we have a celebrated expression:

वेनस्तत् पश्यन्निहितं गुहा सद्यत्र विश्वं भवत्येकनीडम् (Yajurveda XXXII.8)

(Vena beheld that deeply hidden Being where the world makes its home in a single nest). Here is the idea of one common home or one world. One God, one world and hence one humanity. The Vedic idea of one humanity, as expressed in the valedictory Mantra of Ṛgveda, is nothing but singleness of purpose, and hence the exhortation to work in unison.

समानी व आकूतिः समाना हृदयानि वः।
समानमस्तु वो मनो यथा वः सुसहासति।। (X.191.4)

(Common be your aim; united be your hearts; of one accord be your minds so that all of you may live together happily and peacefully). All these three concepts were intertwined in their social philosophy of coordination, cooperation and coexistence.

We find that the Ṛṣis were ever eager to share their riches with fellowmen. They were pleased with life and were at peace with themselves; that is why they could radiate peace. They insisted on doing everything with one mind, knowing fully well the psychological significance of the spirit of cooperation in lending security and stability to life. No wonder that the society based on such a firm foundation of peace-and-stability has retained even today some of its freshness and its virtues, in spite of having passed through centuries of vicissitudes. What little urge for honest work we have today, we owe to them. They had insight enough to realise that, while it is vainglorious to aim at assimilation with Brahman without displaying any benevolence to fellowmen, it is suicidal to keep human society as the only end and the supreme object of love without a spirit of loyalty to a kingdom, which is not of this world. They served God through man, and man, for the sake of God. Duties to man – even secular duties at that – become sanctified when they are done as service to God. It is in this spirit that we have to understand the prayers of Vedic Ṛṣis for the universal welfare and harmony.

सं गच्छध्वं सं वदध्वं सं वो मनांसि जानताम्।
देवा भागं यथा पूर्वे संजानाना उपासते।। (Ṛgveda X.191.2)

(Come ye together, be harmonious in conversation, let your minds be of one accord, just in the manner in which the most venerable gods assemble together and enjoy harmoniously in their respective positions).

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What is presented in subsequent pages is philosophy of mysticism in the Vedas. Prof. R.D. Ranade has systematically dealt with mysticism by going deep into both the psychology of mysticism and philosophy of mysticism. Thus mysticism comes to be treated as an independent subject dealing with an important aspect of human experience. Prof. Ranade's objective was to understand the nature of God and delineate the means of appropriating Him; thus he combined both theoretical and practical aspects of mysticism and set a new pattern in the formulation of a Pathway to God. In his treatment, the prolegomena, chiefly psycho-ethical, deals with the incentives to and moral preparation for spiritual life. First of all, it is necessary to see as to why man turns, if he turns at all, to God. Thereafter he has to imbibe in himself certain virtues which are a *sine qua non* for treading the pathway to God. Then follows philosophical topics like, the nature of God and the spiritual teacher; the relation between the spiritual teacher and disciple; or ,nature and value of the Name of God. This theoretical portion leads to practical aspects, viz. the methodology of meditation and the difficulties which the aspirant encounters in his spiritual pilgrimage. Past this stage of chiaroscuro where God plays the game of hide and seek, comes the stage where a devotee gets varied and rich spiritual experiences which confer blessedness on him.

We have followed this line of treatment in the present work. For this purpose, sources from the Vedas were culled out, arranged systematically topic-wise and interpreted so as to find a Pathway to God in the Vedas.

We have quoted experiences of thinkers and saints of modern times while dealing with Vedic thought. This is bound to appear as anachronism. The intention in alluding to their views is to show that whatever has been developed in later times was already present in the Vedas in seed-form. The very fact that these religious or spiritual experiences are lived and re-lived age after age is proof enough that the Vedic utterances are neither the spinnings of a massive intellect nor fancies of a fertile imagination, but vivid accounts of 'a first hand intuitive experience of Reality'. The mystical experiences of later saints do not hang in the air. They stand anchored to the beatific experiences of a seer at the dawn of civilization. The ancient truths get confirmed again and again while modern thought in turn becomes validated. Well might one say that there is a stream of spiritual thought eternally flowing. In any spiritual experience, 'the eye of omniscience might read all the foregone spiritual history of a culture'.

CHAPTER I

Incentives to Spiritual Life

1. Search for Perfection. Wertheimer, one of the pioneers of the Gestalt School of psychology, concluded after a number of experiments, that in perception, an individual has a tendency to see an imperfect form as a perfect one; a near circle, as a circle; a less organised figure, as a more organised figure. Gaps are filled, lines are shortened or lengthened, so that what is perceived has some meaning. And what is true of perception is much more true of memory. Irregularities in figures that are seen, are ironed out and they become better figures when remembered. Organised wholes or total patterns are psychologically prior to relations or elements into which an object is analysed. This is a very important characteristic of the human mind. Though we need not agree with the Gestaltists in all that they say, we must admit the truth in their theory of perception and memory, that as a matter of psychological fact, man wants to correct incompleteness or restore balance in what he sees or does. Put before a child of five years a picture of a human face with only one eye drawn, and you will notice that the child will instantly draw the other eye. Imperfection, fragmentariness, inadequacy, in a word, a loose screw anywhere, makes the mind uneasy. Unfortunately, bad training and worse examples blunt this faculty of the mind and a grown-up person learns to live with indiscipline and hotch-potch performance of works. But the original nature always holds a brief for perfection. It is no wonder therefore, that this urge for wholeness or search for perfection is clearly present in Vedic literature. It is a natural way of a healthy mind. The Vedic Ṛṣi, the watchward of whose philosophy was harmony, seeks a God who fulfils the abiding longings of a human mind. If man's genuine and universal aspirations go unanswered, it would sound like a discordant note in the playing of the cosmic symphony. "If it is the fundamental principle of a sound philosophy that all

existence forms a harmonious unity, then if we can discover what are the essential and permanent features in the demands made by art, morality and religion upon the world, we may be sure that these demands are somehow met and made good in the scheme of things".[1] What then are such demands and how far are they met in this world? And if they are not so met, where and by whom does man expect them to be made good?

"A perpetual war is kindled", laments Hume, "amongst all living creatures. Necessity, hunger, want, stimulate the strong and courageous. Fear, anxiety, terror, agitate the weak and infirm. The first entrance into life gives anguish to the new-born infant and to its wretched parent. Weakness, impotence, distress, attend each stage of that life; and it is at last finished in agony and horror".[2] All this seems to be unmixed evil and does not justify its own existence because evil is not a precondition of good tidings to come. Should evil necessarily exist? Reason cannot give an unqualified 'Yes' to the question. And if evil is not indispensable, can there not be a state which is free from these malignities, a condition which is washed clean of its black spots, a place which is swept off pain and suffering? And more still, is there not a power which bestows bliss and peace? And man turns to God, who, he thinks, is unalloyed joy. Man, therefore, seeks God as a remover of physical evil and as source of serene beatitude.

Howsoever mighty a man may be in his strength, in possession, in wealth or in intellect, a time comes when they all prove futile. He comes to realise that man is the greatest enemy of man. His efforts become inefficacious and he stands supportless. At such moments, he turns to God for help. Psychologically, in this way, man looks up to God as a manna in the wilderness.

The law of continuity convinces man that there must be a perfect Being as a finale to the imperfections in the world. The world,

1 A.E. Taylor, Elements of Metaphysics, Methuen and Co. Ltd., 36 Essex Street, W.C. London, 1952, P. 382

2 Quoted in Pringle Pattison's Idea of God, Oxford University Press, 35 West, 32nd Street, New York, 1920, P. 17

however, belies one's hopes for finding a Being of superlative excellence here below. And hence the mind weaves all good things in an idea. This idea of a supreme Being or God is that of the sum-total of all reality, the most original Being, the highest Being, or the Being of all beings, says Kant in the Transcendental Dialectic. In this part of the Critique of Pure Reason, we find a construction of the idea of God with which Kant so often lures the reader, but which he as often declares to be merely an *idea* and not a *being* or *existence*. Such a Being, he maintains, can not be proved by speculative reason. But who has ever proved God with the help of reason? Syllogistic reasoning, which proceeds from 'all' to 'some' can not prove God, because there is no term wider in import from which God can be deductively inferred. But are all syllogisms only analytic, making explicit in the conclusion what is implicitly contained in the major premise? The syllogism round which psychology of religion veers, is not analytic but synthetic, says Edward Caird.[1] It leads us from the finite to the Infinite. The world is finite, incomplete, imperfect. The synthetic syllogism adds infinity, completeness or perfection to these qualities and reaches the idea of the Infinite, the Complete, the Perfect. This it calls God. Logically, thus, man starts from the part and argues to the whole and seeks to establish God on the basis of an inductive or synthetic syllogism, which puts more in the conclusion than what is contained in the premises. The passage from the finite to the Infinite is sanctioned because psychology of religion demands it. The fleeting world must have some basis which is itself stable; the ephemeral must be based on permanence, because without an abiding substance no change can be explained. The contingent has its footing in the necessary. "All religion springs out of the sense of nothingness, unreality, transitoriness – in other words, of the essentially negative character of the finite world".[2] Because the world sinks beneath us, we search a foundation that is firm. Metaphysically, therefore, man refuses to grant reality to the limited world and confers it on God who is an infinite source of every thing.

1 E. Caird, The Critical Philosophy of Kant, Vol II, James Maclehose and Sons, Glasgow, 1909, Pp 114 ff

2 Ibid, P. 115

Inspite of Kant's rejection of speculative arguments for the existence of God, there is still left room for moral theology. If no justice is seen in the world, if merit goes unrewarded and wrong-doing goes unpunished here below, there must be a place where this is corrected. And so morally, man relies on a God who equates merit with happiness.

But the faith and conviction remain unconsummated unless man has direct contact with Divinity. Mystically therefore, man longs to experience the Infinite while yet remaining finite.

These constitute different incentives to spiritual life, or reasons why a man turns to God. The Bhagavad-gītā has made famous a classification of seekers after God. We are told that, those who seek God, belong to four different types. There are the Ārtas or the afflicted souls, who approach God for the redress from pain. Then there are those who are moved by curiosity, by a desire to know. They are the Jijñāsus. Still others belong to the category of the profit-minded who care for the cash-value results. They are the Arthārthins. The final type represents those who try to appropriate God for the sake of spiritual illumination. They are called the Jñānins. The first three have strings tied to their devotion, while the fourth alone worships God for the sake of God.

If we look to the countless supplications addressed to various deities by the Vedic Ṛṣis, we find that petitions of the first type i.e. those arising out of deep sorrow, are few and far between. Heart-rending solicitations of a soul encircled by evil or condemned to hell, are almost absent. We do come across the second group i.e. requests which are a result of curiosity or wonder. They exhibit the spirit of enquiry of the Vedic people. By far the majority of panegyrics belong to the third category. Most of the incentives can be classified as originating from desire to gain something. Not infrequently the verses represent charters of demands coming from end-seekers. Lastly, Mantras of the last type, i.e. prayers for the bliss of God are strewn in the Vedas almost everywhere.

We shall study the incentives to spiritual life as found in the Vedas under three heads – intellectual, moral and eudaemonistic.

These are not water-tight compartments, but convenient groups for dealing with the incentives. They only indicate the predominant line of approach. The first bunch of incentives displays the inquisitive nature of the Ṛṣis; the second, their desire for moral excellence and the third, their longing for spiritual wealth, in which material welfare has its own appointed place. There is no outright rejection of worldly prosperity so long as it does not conflict with moral and religious life. The sage makes other demands too. He wishes to be a recipient of religious experiences which make life worthy. He also wants to be immortal. The body is perishable, no doubt, but the seer hopes to attain to a stage where one has overcome the fear of death. He wants tranquillity and divine bliss and he beseeches the higher powers to grant his request. Divine bliss, according to the Vedic sage, comes to fulfil and not to destroy.

2. Intellectual Incentives. Man is filled with wonder when he observes the working of the marvellous machine – the human body. He then asks: "who is the first One that created man's brain, his head, his forehead, or his mouth and then rose to the heavens?" (S.1). Or, "who created the seven openings on the face – two ears, two nostrils, two eyes, and the mouth? By His power, men and animals traverse the course of their lives. Who is It that set in motion the different vital breaths like Prāṇa, Apāna, Vyāna or Samāna, in the body?" (S.2).

Perhaps naturalistic explanation was no explanation for the Ṛṣi. He may not accept that things came into existence or faded out of existence of their own accord. There is, according to him, a creator of the world. Who is He? It is also taken for granted that an ordinary man may not be able to fathom the depths of the cosmos and that it requires a rich fund of knowledge to understand creation. "Who is that wise man that knows the proper application of metre (Chandas)? Who has attained to the original source of speech? Who is regarded as the eighth hero of the sacrificing priests and who has tracked the two bay steeds of Indra?" (S.3).

Man's desire for knowledge is not confined only to his body or to things that surround him. It turns to the cosmos. Ṛṣi Viśvakarman Bhauvana asks, "what was the original cause and what

was the material cause by means of which the creator of this universe, who had the vision of this creation, created this earth below, and the heaven above? Which was the tree, and what forest, out of which the earth and heavens were fashioned? The learned thinkers enquire as to what is that, upon which He is stationed holding all the worlds" (S.4). The answer to the question is provided by the Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa. It says: "Brahman is the forest and Brahman the tree out of which the earth and the heaven were fashioned and I am declaring after thoughtful deliberation that it is Brahman, which existed and supported all the worlds" (S.5). Side by side of the curiosity into the nature of creation, there is seen a reverential feeling towards the Creator. "Let us worship Him who created these worlds and all the creatures that came into existence after Him. May we secure the friendship of Indra by offering hymns of praise to him and thus wait upon our generous lord with humble adorations" (S.6). There is an awareness of one's own ignorance and a need of receiving instruction from some one, who is more mature and more wise. "Immature in understanding and undiscerning in mind, I am inquiring about the secret residences of gods and the seven threads by means of which this garment of universe is prepared and spread out" (S.7). "Who is that seer that knows the creator (father) who is beneath the upper realm and above the lower realm? Who is that seer that can tell as to whence this divine mind originated?" (S.8). It is very interesting to note how the Vedic Mantras reveal a wide variety of enquiries and how, through such enquiries, a definite idea of God gradually emerges. God is deemed as one and the only Reality, as a mysterious and awe-inspiring Being or as a principle which, with all intellectual abilities of men, remains beyond their comprehension. "You know all the births and origins, Oh omniscient God, you alone know what principle there is beyond this creation, and also what subsequently comes along. There is only one principle beyond this creation, there is another substance just following that one, which is very difficult to obtain. I know that greatest of creations and hence I declare that men with rank materialistic outlook are lower in standard" (S.9). While the unitary character of the ultimate reality is quite clear from this Mantra, there is also a suggestion that pursuit of only material wealth is surely

a hindrance in the way of obtaining divine bliss. There are Mantras with definite agnostic overtones. Phenomena are not fully known by an ordinary man, they are known only by God, the great knower. "The bright day and the dark night are traversing the earth and the heavens. Vaiśvānara Agni destroys the darkness with his lustre, in the manner of a king who ascends in power. I do not know the warp and the woof of the sacrifice, its real nature is unknown to me. Also unknown is the real nature of the universe with its subtle and gross elements. Who will explain it all to me? He who reigns over the earth and surveys the heavens by taking on the form of the sun can alone know every thing. Time and on he instructs the mortals in this wisdom" (S.10).

The mention of instruction brings into bold relief the necessity of a spiritual teacher. Ultimate reality may be unknown to the rank and file, but it reveals itself to a chosen few, whose mission it is to impart instruction to the ignorant and the needy. "Let him, who really knows, open his heart and impart the knowledge regarding the beautiful bird (Atman), whose real habitation is unknown as it is hidden in the heart. Let us realise the Atman within us" (S.11). God is hidden in the hearts of men. Men have to collect Him by all possible means. Sāyaṇa in his commentary on this Mantra interprets the word Pada in the Mantra to mean the highest end for which every one must strive.

Thus the Vedic seer tries to fathom into his heart in order to visualise the divine Being. A mysterious aura surrounds the ultimate reality, and hence, the aspirant's desire to know it redoubles. The curious Dīrghatamas Aucathya says: "Being ignorant, I, for the sake of knowledge, ask the learned sages, as to who is the unborn mysterious one who has pillared up these six regions" (S.12). The agnostic trend is also clear in another Mantra. "Neither today, nor tomorrow can It be said to exist. Who can know the inapprehensible Adbhuta?" (S.13). The word Adbhuta covers a wide spectrum of feelings because therein are included awe, wonder, incomprehensibility or even indefinability. It is a mystery which man wants to unravel, but before which his abilities look dwarfish. Rudolf Otto's comment on the term 'Adbhuta' is very illuminating. "It is the

experience of our 'shuddering'. But, on the other hand, Adbhuta is also the name for the supreme transcendent marvel and its attractive spell, the element of 'fascination', even for the eternal Brahman himself and his salvation, the Adbhutam that passes beyond the reach of speech".[1] God has a tremendous, attractive force, though He remains beyond knowledge. He will remain so for those, who are blinded by ignorance and egoism. "You do not know Him who created all this universe; nor that One which is within you. Enrapt on all sides by the mist of ignorance are the hymn-chanters, who move about chanting hymns with egoism and aiming merely at material gains" (S.14). The suggestion in the Mantra that moral purity is necessary for knowing God is very significant. For moral excellence, or destruction of his sins, man approaches God. Though fully aware of his own limited capacity for knowledge which makes him somewhat of an agnostic, the sage continues to strive for knowledge. The vastness of cosmos, the infinite variety of natural phenomena, the polar cycles of long-drawn nights, and the waxing and waning of days with an almost unending twilight in between, would make any thinker, at the dawn of civilization, feel palpably tiny to have even an inkling into the nature and majesty of God. But the Ṛṣi, who is ever optimistic, hopes for light. Because of geographical circumstances, it had become habitual with him to wait for light. His yearning was not merely for the physical light, but for the light of knowledge. Moreover, knowledge for him was not merely intellectual or logical knowledge; real knowledge consisted in the direct experience or mystical realisation of God. "Dispel the dark ignorance so deeply ingrained in me; destroy all the enemies that greatly agitate my mind; and bless me with the experience of the supernal light which I so eagerly long for" (S.15). Sāyaṇa in his commentary explains गुह्यं तमः or concealed darkness as गुहारूपे हृदये भवं तमोभावरूपाज्ञानम् (the ignorance and passions that infest the cave of the heart). He further explains ज्योति or light as परतत्त्वसाक्षात्काररूपं ज्ञानम् (illumination which results from the realisation of the highest

1 The Idea of the Holy, Humphrey Milford, Oxford University Press, 1926, P. 133

Reality). Thus it is the spiritual light for which the sage is craving. The same buoyant attitude is seen in another Ṛk : "Like birds with beautiful wings, the seekers Priyamedhas have humbly approached Indra. Dispel darkness, fill our eyes with the divine light and release us from the bonds that have firmly wound round us" (S.16). With a dauntless spirit, the sage urges men to toil for the blissful light. "Oh seeker, climb up, never suffer a defeat. Free yourself from the bonds of death. Don't keep yourself away from the realm of light and from Agni and Sūrya" (S.17).

The Mahābhārata narrates that to a question by the Yakṣa as to what the greatest wonder in this world is, Yudhiṣṭhira replied that though every day man sees that people are making their final journey towards the place of Yama, he does not realise that he too has to go by the same route one day. Man thinks that he is immortal. How can he do so, in the face of the great exodus he witnesses every day? The answer is simple. The tendency to exclude himself from the mortals is an externalisation of his innermost wish to be immortal. He does not want the thread of life to be cut off abruptly and feels sorry when he sees that life, after all, is evanescent. "This body is like a bubble in water, being constituted by nails, trunk, hands, arms, thighs, stomach, head, hair, flesh, blood, bones and muscles" (S.18). Creation, alas, does not have the same characteristics everywhere. There is unequal distribution of natural gifts, and this becomes obvious at every step. "Oh Lord, at the beginning you endowed the holy gods with the choicest gift – the gift of immortality. Thereafter, as a gift to men, you started mortal existence, life succeeding life" (S.19). Though there is realisation that he has been given a lesser of the two gifts, man hopes to live on, if not in one continuous life, at least in life after life. "As day comes after day and season comes after season without fail, Oh great sustainer, create a chain of lives" (S.20). Thus we find that man goes in appeal to God for a lease of life. Death constitutes the greatest single enemy of man. "Remove this foot of death from our existence. Let the long life be lengthened still more. Let us lead a life that is pure and clean and which is full of assets as well as progeny" (S.21). And the request is granted. Here is an assurance as expressed by the sage Samkusuka Yāmāyana: "I have put this

limit to a man's life. Let him not spoil this treasure of a hundred-year life. Let him live that long and keep death at a distance" (S.22). It has been recognised that the Vedic people had a great zest for life. They wanted to live long and live well. Readiness for effort and hopes for new things are seen in a number of Mantras. "The river studded with stones is flowing on; cautiously move together. Get up my friends and cross over. Let us leave behind those that are evil-minded and let us cross over to those powers that are beneficial" (S.23). "Along with Sūrya, the son of Aditi, I share in the glory of the glorious and the wisdom of the learned" (S.24). Or again, "we eagerly long for that perpetual divine light which illumines the path of Truth and keeps all seekers on the path of righteousness" (S.25). But no one can hope to achieve riches without effort. Fortified with courage and confidence, one has to overcome the stumbling blocks on the way. "Dear seekers, you have now to wade through waters of mortal life. Having been fortunate enough to get this human life, try to attain to what is immortal nectar. The divine mother is cooking this food for you" (S.26).

Calamities, no less than ephemerality of life, lead man Godward. No help can be as reassuring as that coming from that inexhaustible, celestial source of mercy. "Oh Agni, who are ever so young, you free your devotees from all dangers and shower grace on him. This is a region of thieves and mean-minded people. We have approached you and apprised you of our difficulties. When kindled, Agni will never hand us over to the sinful and sharp-tongued ones" (S.27). "Oh you chanters, compose Mantras that are full of literary grace for the sake of Indra. He who offers sacrifices to Indra, is saved from dangers of very long standing" (S.28).

The mode of propitiating the deities at Vedic times, was two-fold. One was to sing eulogies to them; and this explains the presence of a good number of praise-songs in the Vedas. The other was to perform sacrifices and offer libations to the deities through Agni, who was a trusted friend and who used to reach these offerings to gods. Sacrifices are thus a mode of worship, a symbol of prayer or contemplation on God. Meditation on the name of God which was the main stay of a Ṛṣi's life, is verily a sacrifice. By ardent

meditation the seers made gods their allies. "If a man is under the protection of Mitra, Varuṇa and Aryamā, who are profoundly wise, is it ever possible that such a man can be injured with deceit?" (S.29). "Have favour of his grace; offer honours to the supremely powerful Indra. In our struggle for achieving plenitude, whenever we come across difficulties of any sort or any magnitude, prayer to Indra should be our sole resort" (S.30). Again, "Agni, kindled and brilliant and fed with oblation, slays the encircling unkind forces with a desire to offer treasure of wealth to his devotees" (S.31). We also come across a verse which testifies to the heart-felt devotion of the ancient sage. It is only too well-known that man remembers God only when he is in difficulty; when surrounded by fortune and pleasure, God's name sinks into oblivion. But not so with the Ṛṣi; he invokes the Lord to lead him not only when buffetted by misfortunes but also at the time when fortune is smiling on him. Kabir in later times remarked that those who remember God even in times of plenty, will never suffer any sorrow. "You are our guide, Oh Indra, in favourable circumstances as well as in unfavourable ones; lead us. Your steeds are powerful and know no fatigue. With them lead us towards vast treasures" (S.32).

Many are the afflictions that attack a man in his life on earth; there are physical ailments and mental worries. Moreover, the fear of enemies or unfriendly people always looms large. For redemption from all these, man solicits divine help. Soma or the spiritual nectar which a mystic enjoys during concentrated meditation, removes all his ills. Here is a mention of the experience of partaking of the ambrosial juice which cleanses the body as well as the mind and restores man's wellbeing. "Today at Sun-rise, Oh Mitra and Varuṇa, I have tasted Soma; for Soma is the only effective medicine for the afflicted" (S.33). "Bring for us vigour, Oh Aświns, and favour us with a sprinkling of your honey. Prolong our life, ward off unholy forces from us, destroy hostile power and be our companions for ever" (S.34). There are times when inspite of man's devotions, his adversities persist; and man invokes God's mercy. Such ardent prayers, though rare, are found in the Vedas. "I am the man who sang your glory at the time of Soma sacrifice. Yet, torturing worries overpower me like a wolf assailing a thirsty deer. Give attention to

this, Oh, heaven and earth, like rival wives on both sides, my ribs are oppressing me. Oh Śatakratu, biting cares are devouring me, your devotee, just like rats devour the weaver's threads" (S.35). And there is fear from enemies that pounce upon a man from unknown quarters, which makes life miserable and full of tensions. As he does not know the retiring place of the enemy, he cannot forearm himself for the fight; and hence assistance is sought from above. "Pray, let not the unknown, the malevolent, the deeply mischievous, the sinful and the malignant overpower us. Being protected by your grace we may cross safely through manifold calamities" (S.36). The seer is fully aware of the enemy sitting inside a man's mind and creating havoc—the enemy in the form of our vices. He wants his mind to be purified and his speech to be turned sweet. It must be understood that mere agreeableness of speech is of no use unless it is an expression of a virtuous mind. Wholesomeness of speech must be an expression of the wholesomeness of intentions. The Vedic sage is here imploring the lord to sanctify his mind and also his speech. "Inspire, oh Savitṛ, the sacrificer to obtain pure wealth. May Savitṛ, resident of the heavens and guardian of speech, accord to us a magnanimous mind and a sweet tongue" (S. 37).

3. Moral Incentives. Along with physical and psychological evils, moral evil or sin also makes man miserable. He looks to God with confidential intimacy and begs to be absolved from effects of wrong actions. "Whether with an eager longing for gain or without it, or whether at the time of its fulfilment, if I ever intended any sin or injury to anyone, while in wakeful state or in sleep, pray, God Agni may kindly bear away from me all inequities and wrong doings" (S.38). The seer Brahmā urges, "Knowingly or unknowingly if there has been any lapse, release us with one mind, from all of them. If there is a back-sliding in waking state or in sleep, if I have committed sins in the past or may commit any in future, release me from them as fastened cattle from the peg" (S.39). The Ṛṣi indulgently requests the lord that he be not punished for moral transgressions. Not merely this, he wants immunity even from any guilt that may be committed in future. People these days ask for anticipatory bail, i.e. bail even before arrest. This request of the Ṛṣi is similar in intent; it is asking for anticipatory pardon. The devotee is sure that any

dereliction on his part, will be forgiven by the benevolent God. "Raise him, Oh Lord, who has fallen. Cleanse him of his obliquities and bestow long life on him" (S.40). Invitations are sent out to gods to come and grace the sacrificial halls. When authorities are present, there is no possibility of any kind of trouble. "Oh Indra and Varuṇa, the man whose sacrifice you attend, is not contaminated by any sin or difficulty. Come with your divine gifts. Listen to our songs of applause. Be our friends, for your friendship is ever benign" (S.41). Presence of deities is really the presence of godly feelings and thoughts in ourselves. The more widespread and more burning they are, the less the chance of man's straying into misconduct. We have to kindle virtues in us so that the vices leave the mind; for they can ill afford to live in the same house as virtues. "Agni's face is visible in all directions. Let him burn our sins. Agni's face is visible in all directions. May he carry us beyond blemishes as men are carried in a boat" (S.42).

The Vedic sage, with an insight of a psychologist, prays for freedom from bondage of three types. "Oh Varuṇa release us from the uppermost bondage, from the nethermost one as well as from that which lies in between. We shall then be completely free from any taint and will always be within the bounds of your laws" (S.43). Now, what are these three bondages? They are, according to one interpretation, the inducements of the three qualities, Sattva, Rajas and Tamas. According to another, they are three types of Karmas, the uppermost ones are the sacrifices, the middle ones are charities and the lower ones are misdeeds of man. A man who wants to enjoy bliss of God, does not want even fruits of good actions, because, after all, they are also binding. Yet one more and better interpretation is to understand the three bondages as those of intellect, mind and senses. All the three in their own way misbehave. It is not correct to condemn the sense-organs alone. The shameless senses commit the crime, no doubt; but the demoralised mind is an abetter, and the corrupt intellect connives at their unprincipled behaviour, nay, at times it even provokes the senses and causes their fall. An aspirant therefore must guard himself from all sides. And so he clamours for divine assistance. "Send away all evil, Oh Lord and send us all good things" (S.44).

4. Eudaemonistic Incentives. There is a very large group of prayers which covertly or overtly presents a demand sheet. The ancient people did not think that there is anything wrong in enjoying worldly pleasures and therefore they had no inhibition in asking for them. "To Indra alone we appeal for his friendship, for wealth and heroic might. The powerful Indra who showers bounties is able to help us" (S.45). "Indra is the sovereign of heaven and earth, waters and mountains. Indra is the lord of prosperity and wisdom. Hence Indra ought to be invoked for acquisition as well as protection of riches" (S.46). It is interesting to note that the words Yoga (acquisition) and kṣema (protection) occur here together. The concept of Yoga-kṣema was later made famous by the Bhagavad-gītā where the Lord assumes the responsibility of looking after the welfare of the devotee. Yoga and Kṣema refer not only to material wealth but to all types of gains, intellectual, moral and spiritual. "Pray, give strength to our bodies, Oh Indra, and give strength to our bulls; give strength to our sons and progeny, so that they may attain to fullness in life. For, you are verily the sole dispenser of strength" (S.47). The word Baladā (giver of strength) occuring elsewhere also, clearly shows that it is the very nature of Indra to distribute things. Man's asking only provides an occasion for his generosity. However, there are other verses which indicate as if Indra's boons are given because he is propitiated with something. "Confer upon us, who are affluent in offerings, oh Agni, that well renowned power and manifold riches. Associated with Rudras and Vasus, give us unfailing protection" (S.48). "It is Indra and Indra alone, who bestows wealth on mortal man who offers oblations to him. Indra verily is a powerful lord whom none can resist" (S.49). "I solicit the help of Indra, the lord of the Ṛbhus and pray to him for partaking of Soma along with Ṛbhus, Vājas and Maruts. May Varuṇa and Mitra and Aświns speed us to wealth, wisdom and victory" (S.50). Indra seems to be a popular sovereign, for he is available to everyone irrespective of one's status. "Men of all classes, the high, the low and the middle, invoke Indra. Those that struggle hard, as well as those that rest with contentment, invoke Indra. Those that remain at home and those that are engaged in fighting, also invoke Indra. Men desirous of wealth invoke Indra" (S.51). We may refer to one stanza

which demands wealth as a matter of right. "Oh Indra, bring for us a variety of riches even from afar. Those riches are to be inherited by a son from his father, by a youngster from the elders or by a student from his teacher" (S.52).

With all such requests for material wealth it would be wrong to think that the Vedic society was completely earth-bound. It had its feet on the *terra firma* no doubt, but its eyes were always glued to the light from above. The Vedic literature is evidence enough for the high spiritual development of the sages. They were great devotees, they had practised severe penance, had experienced Truth at first hand and it is only as a result of their deep absorption in the divine, that they have uttered the Mantras. In T.S. Eliot's words, apprehension of the point of intersection between the Timeless and time was their occupation. Worshipping by means of sacrifice which can be taken as symbolic of meditation on the sacred divine name or one-pointed remembrance of God's name seems to be a discipline to be rigorously followed. In its train comes the singing of devotional songs, which, as is evident from the practice prevalent in most of the historieal religions, is a popular mode of veneration. They had known the bliss of mystical experience and so they again turned to God for the more and more of it.

There has been made a distinction between the way of the flesh and the way of the spirit; the former is easy but fruitless, the latter, hard but fruitful. "I have heard of two paths, by which the mortals travel, one leads to gods and the other to the fathers. All those situated between heaven and earth take either of the two paths" (S.53). Ṛṣi Uparibabhrava exclaims: "Oh you devotee, go beyond good (Bhadra) and achieve what is the ultimate end (Śreyas). May the learned Bṛhaspati be your guide. May the heroic rule over the world and may all enmity come to an end" (S.54). "The path of righteousness is clearly visible. It will lead us beyond all miseries. The way to divine glory is also within the reach of the eye", sings an enthusiastic Ṛṣi (S.55). Those whom the gods help, are automatically led to the right path and to success. "When the spoils of war are conferred, Indra is prayed for final instructions. They who have Indra on their side, will verily win" (S.56). "I had the good fortune of having a vision of Him, whom the whole world should

behold. On this very earth, I saw His chariot. He accepted my verbal offerings" (S.57). Sāyaṇa's commentary on this Mantra runs: He, on whom the whole world should feast its eyes, had manifested Himself to shower grace on us (अस्मदनुग्रहार्थं अत्र आविर्भूतम्), implying that God is not chary in his bounties, and He comes on His own to endow gifts. It is up to man to make the best of it. "The man who is a fortunate recipient of thy love, becomes a person of good and wide reputation and leads a happy and comfortable life" (S.58). That the sage is desirous of spiritual illumination, becomes clear from other Ṛks also. "With profound respects, Oh Agni, I vouchsafe to this infallible truth that you are the owner of all the terrestrial and celestial supplies. Tell us, however, Oh Jātavedas, what portion of this wealth you are going to settle on us. Pray, let me know the best in their unknown possessions which can be obtained by following this path" (S.59). "Verily, Oh Indra, we devotees hasten to you with some offering for manifold spiritual gains, which are resplendent and blissful. Pray, favour us with the same" (S.60). Having approached Indra, the sovereign Lord, it is no use asking for goods which are subject to destruction. And hence a request for ever fresh things. "Oh Agni, we pray to you for becoming recipients of your most coveted wealth, which does not decay and perish" (S.61). There is a verse which urges one to plod on and on and go ahead of the compeers. "You are wise, you are strong. You are the protector of the body. Achieve the supreme goal and out-shine those who are your equals. You are power, you are illuminator. You are supreme happiness and light. Achieve the supreme goal and excel those who are your equals" (S.62).

5. Yearnings for Mystical Experience. One thing the saint-poet longs for, is the mystical experience of God. Other gains are only epiphenomena. Mystical experience, it is well-known, does not involve the sense-organs. However, these supersensuous experiences resemble those that are gathered with the help of the sense-organs i.e., there are experiences of form and light and colours without the physical eye being used. Supersensuousness of spiritual experience is an accepted fact and it is sought to be corroborated by mystical experience of form and light which a blind man can enjoy. Needless to say there are also experiences of sound, taste,

smell or touch. They are wondrous manifestations of God and they confer an inexpressible beatific joy on the mystic. Such are the experiences for which the sage is so keen. "Oh Sūrya, you radiate light, are beautiful and move about in the world as you wish. You stand face to face with the devotees, so that they may feast their eyes upon your form" (S.63). The form is not merely delightful to the eye, it has the power to help an aspirant to cross over the worldly existence. The word Taraṇiḥ (तरणिः) in the Mantra is explained by Sāyaṇa as संसाराब्धेः तारकोऽसि (you carry us over the sea of this ephemeral existence). "May we, Oh Agni, have our desires fulfilled through your grace. Through your grace, lord of wealth, may we obtain spiritual well-being and good company. May we share food with all others and may we partake of your purity and your imperishable light" (S.64). "Pray, bless us with tranquillity and guide us into the world of spiritual light for enjoyment of all the felicities in life. Kindly lead us on now, to a richer and fuller life" (S.65). The seer sings to the almighty hymns of overflowing applause. "Let us offer our homage to Indra who is the embodiment of truth itself, and not to one tainted with untruth. A deadly blow is dealt to those who do not have devotion in offering Soma, whereas manifold lights are granted to the devout seekers who dedicate their Soma offerings to Indra. Of good omen are the blessings of Indra" (S.66). "We pray to Indra for the sake of his greatness which that most powerful hero possesses, which is also boundless, undecaying and serene. Kindly allow us, Oh Lord, to share in your grandeur, so that we may enjoy it fully" (S.67). The high aspirations of the devotee are note-worthy. He is not satisfied merely by the revelation of the lord but wants to share in his radiance. This is a sure indication of the insatiable thirst of the saint for spiritual joy. It whets his appetite more and more as he keeps ascending in his experiences. "By the power of your mercy and with the aid of your protecting means, may we be granted the everlasting mystical vision of the sun" (S.68). "We pray for a pretty long life with your soothing vision before our eyes —a long life with your soothing vision" (S.69).

The Vedic aspirant is hymning the lord for yet another goal — sainthood. Real sainthood consists in attaining to permanent and growing religious experiences, or in achieving equanimity. It is a

state characterised by deep devotion to god, by joy and peace and by almost an irresistible urge to broadcast the same to the world, without so much as an inkling of any expectation. "Have fondness for me, Indra. Lengthen our lives, heighten our devotion. Be satisfied with whatever words I speak and make me your real devotee" (S.70). "Kindly favour us with the spiritual wealth which sanctifies worldly wealth. Pray, raise me to the status of seerhood like that of Jamadagni" (S.71). The ardour to be always a recipient of religious experiences is seen in a number of eclogues. "Will you make me the guardian of the people? Will you make me a prominent ruler, Oh benignant and all-powerful God, will you make me a seer (Ṛṣi) who relishes the divine Soma juice? Will you make me the master of ever-lasting spiritual riches?" (S.72). Sainthood, though a very coveted position in the pilgrim's progress towards spiritual perfection, does not mark an end either of austerities or of mystical experiences. The saint continues to meditate on the name of God and continues to enjoy new and yet new visions. After all, as Prof. R.D. Ranade said, who can put a limit to the ways in which god manifests Himself? "Saints, who are endowed with illumination, continue to engage themselves in worshipping the supreme Reality for further heights in ecstatic enjoyments. A seeker who is able to visualise them face to face, verily himself becomes a sage having realisation of Brahman, the ultimate Reality" (S.73). The same unlimited character of experiences is seen in another Ṛk uttered by the holy man Madhucchandas Vaiśvāmitra. "Accept my humble Soma offering, Indra, and be pleased; favour me with a new light in my life and make me a seer having innumerable, supersenuous spiritual experiences" (S.74). Madhvācārya in his Ṛg-bhāṣya stresses this very point that the saint wants to reap thousand-fold benefits from God. He comments on the words सहस्रसाम् ऋषिम् in this Mantra as ऋषिं सहस्रलाभं मां कुरु (make me a saint and recipient of thousands of gains). Sāyaṇa too comments: मां सहस्रसां सहस्रसंख्याकलाभोपेतं ऋषिं कुरु (let me be blessed with Ṛṣihood and bounties that can be measured in thousands).

6. Desire for Immortality. There are still other hopes for the realisation of which the lyric-singer turns to God. He wants

immortality in this very life; he wishes to win over death itself. He knows that his essence is not body but soul and hopes that his soul should live in bliss though the body may fall off. "A mortal as I am, with heart filled with reverence and devotion, I am invoking you who are immortal. Oh, Jātavedas, pray, bestow glory upon us and upon our family; let me attain to immortality" (S.75). "You are the emperors of the world, Mitra and Varuṇa; you look dazzling in an assembly. We beg of you with folded hands the gift of rains, grace and immortality. Your word fills heaven and earth like thunder" (S.76). Immortality is certainly not physical immortality, for, it is neither asked for, nor granted. What the Ṛṣi is visualising is a state, where, after realising one's identity with the Infinite, one lives on, not merely as a finite being, but as a finite in the Infinite. "May Vivasvān make death run away from us. Let Sūrya keep us fit till old age" (S.77). Or, "Adorable is your greatness and life-giving your vision, like the sun. Pray, lead us hence to immortality" (S.78). All deficiency is associated with mortal existence and all excellence with immortality. Miseries, sorrows, sufferings, sins must all be removed before one attains to immortality. "Oh omniscient God, if inadvertently any lapse has appeared in our conduct, kindly save us from its evil effects. May we attain to immortality along with our companions" (S.79). Similar is the import of the famous Mantra in the Yajurveda (also repeated in the Īśopaniṣad) which reconciles the claims of action and knowledge and which declares immortality as a fruit of the tree of real knowledge or intuitive realisation of God. "He who knows the real place of action and knowledge, crosses the ocean of death by means of action, and gains immortality by means of knowledge" (S.80). Prof. R.D. Ranade's interpretation of the two concepts, Vidyā and Avidyā enables us to understand the above Mantra very clearly and gives us a new perspective. By carefully and skillfully dissecting the Mantra layer by layer, and finding out parallels for these concepts from Greek philosophy, Professor Ranade shows that here is present in the form of a suggestion the Bhagavad-gītā doctrine of disinterested action. We may summarise his account. The Mantra preceding this one states that those who follow the path of ignorance, go to blind darkness and those who follow the path of knowledge, go to greater darkness still. One fails

to understand how the path of knowledge can ever lead to greater darkness. It must be remembered that not knowledge but the pride of possessing that knowledge, is a man's undoing. One who merely pursues the path of false knowledge (Avidyā), gains nothing; but even those who pride themselves for having right knowledge (Vidyā), meet with worse fate. It is a clever combination of recognising the real place of lower knowledge and possessing without pride the higher knowledge, that one stands to gain. The lower and higher categories may be sense-knowledge and intellectual knowledge (termed 'opinion' and 'knowledge' respectively in Greek philosophy) which are synthesised in intuition; they may also refer to the path of action and path of knowledge which are synthesised in distinterested action. Such a synthesis can be effected only by him who goes beyond sense-knowledge and intellect and attains to intuitive apprehension of God.[1]

Neither sense nor intellect is discarded; they are the negative and the positive 'moments' in the whole process; they are re-arranged and transcended in the higher synthesis. This type of apprehension, "while it lifts us beyond the sphere of an opposition, which seemed absolute, brings into view a principle of unity which was hidden beneath the difference of its terms..."[2] "The reality of things, since it cannot be apprehended by our divided intelligence either through perception or through conception, either through sense or through understanding, must be apprehended by an intuitive intelligence, for which the division of the two does not exist, or by which it is transcended; i.e. it can be apprehended only by an intelligence which is entirely different from ours".[3] Such a knowledge-process possesses the immediacy of sense-perception

1 Those who are interested should refer to the excellent exposition of the Mantra in the two books: (a) R.D. Ranade, A Constructive Survey of Upanishadic Philosophy, (2nd Edition), Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bombay-400 007, 1968, Pp. 218-219 (b) S.K. Belvalker and R.D. Ranade, The Creative Period, Bilvakunja Publishing House, Poona, 1927, Pp. 171-174

2 E. Caird, The Critical Philosophy of Kant, Vol. I, James Maclehose and Sons, Glasgow, 1909, P. 176

3 Ibid. P. 174

and objectivity of intellect and thus corrects the defects of both. Kant calls it perceptive intelligence or intuitive understanding; but he does not grant this capacity to human beings. The Vedic Ṛṣi on the other hand, was positive about the fact that man does possess this faculty and that it alone enables him to gain immortality. This is the power of mystical realisation of God. Avidyā and Vidyā are not merely epistemological categories; they represent two apparently opposite stages in any dialectic; they are the thesis and the antithesis which are later combined in the synthesis. That is why, Avidyā and Vidyā were taken by Prof. Ranade to mean the path of action and the path of knowledge. The Mantra in question virtually breaks down under the weight of the message it conveys.

7. Hope for Divine Bliss. There is a breathtakingly long list of demands. Yet another incentive for the sage to turn to God is his craving for blessedness. "Mortal man should necessarily pray to the Ādityas for the gift of unparallelled raptures. As human beings, we are by nature prone to death. Pray, prolong our life so that we may relish the taste of real life" (S.81). "When a man, enlightened with the fire of devotion, sacrifices every thing for the sake of God, then only will he be able to experience the taste of the supreme beatitude" (S.82). Yet another seer hums: "May we attain to that covetable realm where God-devoted sages are privileged to enjoy the ecstatic delight. In that supreme realm of Viṣṇu, there is the ever bubbling fountain of joy. He is the nearest of kin to all of us" (S.83). There is a Mantra in which we find a mention of different categories of existence — the physical like sea, the biological like animals and the psychological like man's heart. "The whole universe depends on the support of your light and glory, whether in the sea or in the life of animals or in the heart of man. Favour us with the enjoyment of that honey-flavoured wave of contentment" (S.84). The sage as is his wont, will offer glorificatory poems to God for this ecstatic state. "Offer your prayers to him who is ever youthful, is non-violent in words, is the source of all felicity and is ready to guide you to Truth through the ocean of worldly existence" (S.85). There is a clear awareness in the Ṛṣi that he alone can be transported to the region of bliss, who, by the force of his meditation, is entitled to a direct vision of God, because that vision itself is the bliss supreme. "Men,

like fair-winged birds sucking honey, encamp on the tree of this universe and procreate. On the top of that tree there is, they say, the most enchantingly sweet fruit. Nobody can claim it except the one who sees face to face God, the father of the universe" (S.86).

The ideal the Vedic Ṛṣi really cherished, was a judicious combination of worldly happiness and spiritual bliss. As seen above, it is a right synthesis of this-worldliness and other-worldliness, each having its rightful place. Both active life and contemplative life are valued and a healthy blend of the two is sought after. "I find recourse to none other except you for prosperity, strength, stateliness and spiritual eminence" (S.87). "Shower on us, oh Indra, the streams of celestial and terrestrial distinction and exaltation, infuse splendid vigour in your devotee" (S.88). In this Mantra as in the next two, two different words Pārthiva (earthly) and Divya (heavenly) are used for these two distinct types of majesty. The sages knew their respective standings in life. "All dignity, worldly and spiritual, is yours, Oh Indra and Agni. Pray, extend to us that nobility which is capable of nurturing all living beings" (S.89). The sage Viśvamanas Vaiyaśva prays : "Oh Mitra and Varuṇa, who have control over gifts as well as over heavenly and earthly food, send down peerless showers towards us" (S.90). An Atharvaveda Mantra exudes a freshness as it longs after consolidation of knowledge and bliss. The Ṛṣi calls on God again and again, to elevate him. "Oh Vācaspati, come here, come again. Confer light on me. Let me be a permanent abode of knowledge" (S.91). The same confident and lively attitude is seen in another Mantra also. "With that divine food, which was virtuously prepared for Brahman by the first promulgator of moral laws, Prajāpati, which sustains the world and which does not harm anyone; with that food I shall conquer death. With that food, by which the creators won over death, which food was obtained with virtue and austerities, which was prepared for Brahman, I shall overcome death. With that divine food from which nectar was born, which became the overlord of Gāyatrī, in which are established the Vedas; with that food I shall cross over death" (S.92). For the Vedic Ṛṣi hopes raised are hopes fulfilled. By the moral-spiritual path of meditation on the name of God, he feels sure to reach the highest end. "May my life be prolonged by meditation, may my vital airs

become more zestful by meditation, may my eyes, and ears become sharp and my back be solid by meditation. We have become the children of Prajāpati; Oh gods, we have reached the heavens, we have become immortal" (S.93).

A survey of incentives shows that various reasons put a man on the pathway to God. Fully aware of his imperfection, and at the same time being convinced that only the most perfect can remould imperfection into perfection, man runs for divine support. For a radiant intellect, the aspirant looks up to the mass of radiance; for moral insight, he approaches the morally perfect; for bliss, he prays to the bliss incarnate. A fair sample of handpicked Mantras gives us an insight into the mind of the Vedic seeker after truth. Uninhibited in his demands, he is profusely thankful when the prayers are granted; this spotlights his open-mindedness. He admits his faults and asks for forgiveness and this shows his practical wisdom. He wishes for earthly riches but subordinates them to divine peace; this reflects his healthy eudaemonistic mentality. In the hymns there is mention of need of instruction, of moral discipline, or of grace. All this strikes a respondent chord in the heart of any modern devotee. The outpourings do not represent the mental states peculiar only to the Vedic sage. His is a paradigm case wherein is found the reflection of abiding hopes in the human heart. Through these praise-songs, offered with a mood of tranquil dignity, any seeker will feel the pulse of his great great ancestor. The Vedas give us indisputably the first saga of spiritual life.

SOURCES-I

1 मस्तिष्कमस्य यतमो ललाटं ककाटिकां प्रथमो यः कपालम्।
चित्वा चित्यं हन्वोः पूरुषस्य दिवं रुरोह कतमः स देवः।। अथर्ववेद X.2.8

2. कः सप्त खानि वि ततर्द शीर्षणि कर्णाविमौ नासिके चक्षणी मुखम्।
येषां पुरुत्रा विजयस्य मह्मनि चतुष्पादो द्विपदो यन्ति याममु।।
को अस्मिन्प्राणमवयत्को अपानं व्यानमु।
समानमस्मिन्को देवोऽधि शिश्राय पूरुषे।। अथर्ववेद X.2.6, 13

3. कशृछंदसां योग मा वेद धीरः को धिष्ण्यां प्रति वाचं पपाद।
कमृत्विजामष्टमं शूरमाहुर्हरी इंद्रस्य नि चिकाय कः स्वित्।। ऋग्वेद X.114.9

4. किं स्विदासीदधिष्ठानं आरंभणं कतमत् स्वित् कथासीत्।
यतो भूमिं जनयन् विश्वकर्मा वि द्यामौर्णोन्महिना विश्वचक्षाः।
किं स्विद्वनं क उ स वृक्ष आस यतो द्यावापृथिवी निष्टतक्षुः।
मनीषिणो मनसा पृच्छतेदु तद् यदध्य तिष्ठद्भुवनानि धारयन्।। ऋग्वेद X.81.2, 4

5. ब्रह्म वनं ब्रह्म स वृक्ष आसीत् यतो द्यावापृथिवी निष्टतक्षुः।
मनीषिणो मनसा विब्रवीमि वः। ब्रह्माध्यतिष्ठत् भुवनानि धारयन् इति।।
तैत्तिरीय ब्राह्मण II.8.9.6

6. तमु ष्टवाम य इमा जजान विश्वा जातान्यवराण्यस्मात्।
इंद्रेण मित्रं दिधिषेम गीर्भिरुपो नमोभिर्वृषभं विशेम।। ऋग्वेद VIII.96.6

7. पाकः पृच्छामि मनसा विजानन् देवानामेना निहिता पदानि।
वत्से वष्कयेऽधि सप्त तन्तून्वि तत्निरे कवय ओतवा उ।। ऋग्वेद I.164.5

8. अवः परेण पितरं यो अस्य वेदावः परेण पर एनावरेण।
कवीयमानः क इह प्र वोचद्देवं मनः कुतो अधि प्रजातम्।। ऋग्वेद I.164.18

9. त्वं ह्यङ्ग वरुण स्वधावन्विश्वा वेत्थ जनिमा सुप्रणीते।
किं रजस एना परो अन्यदस्त्येना किं परेणावरममुर।। अथर्ववेद V.11.5

10. अहश्च कृष्णमहरर्जुनंच वि वर्तेते रजसी वेद्याभिः।
वैश्वानरो जायमानो न राजा अवातिरज्ज्योतिषाग्निस्तमांसि।।
नाहं तंतुं न वि जानाम्योतुं न यं वयंति समरेऽतमानाः।
कस्य स्वित् पुत्र इह वक्त्यानि परो वदात्यवरेण पित्रा।।
स इत् तंतुं स वि जानात्योतुं स वक्त्यानि ऋतुथा वदाति।
य ईम् चिकेतत् अमृतस्य गोपा अवश्चरन् परो अन्येन पश्यन्।।
ऋग्वेद VI.9.1, 2, 3

11. इह ब्रवीतु य ईमङ्ग वेदास्य वामस्य निहितं पदं वेः।
शीर्ष्णः क्षीरं दुह्रते गावो अस्य वव्रिं वसाना उदकं पदापुः।। ऋग्वेद I.164.7

12. अचिकित्वांश्चिकितुषश्चिदत्र कवीन्पृच्छामि विद्मने न विद्वान्।
वि यस्तस्तम्भ षडिमा रजांस्यजस्य रूपे किमपि स्विदेकम्।। ऋग्वेद I.164.6

13. न नूनमस्ति नो श्वः कस्तद् वेद यदद्भुतम्।
अन्यस्य चित्तं अभि संचरेण्यं उताधीतं वि नश्यति।। ऋग्वेद I.170.1

14. न तं विदाथ य इमा जजानाऽन्यद्युष्माकमंतरं बभूव।
नीहारेण प्रावृता जल्प्या चाऽसुतृप उक्थ शासश्चरंति।। ऋग्वेद X.82.7

15. गूहता गुह्यं तमो वि यात विश्वमत्रिणम्।
ज्योतिष्कर्ता यदुश्मसि।। ऋग्वेद 1.86.10

16. वयः सुपर्णा उप सेदुरिंद्रं प्रियमेधा ऋषयो नाधमानाः।
अप ध्वांतं ऊर्णुहि पूर्धि चक्षुर्मुमुग्धि अस्मान् निधयेव बद्धान्।। ऋग्वेद X.73.11

17. उत्क्रामातः पुरुष माव पत्था मृत्योः पड्वीशमवमुंचमानः।
मा च्छित्था अस्माल्लोकादग्नेः सूर्यस्य संदृशः।। अथर्ववेद VIII.1.4

18. नखश्च पृष्ठश्च करौ च बाहू जंघे चोरू उदरं शिरश्च।
रोमाणि मांसं रुधिरास्थिमज्जमेतच्छरीरं जलबुद्बुदोपमम्।।
ऋग्वेद (खिलसूक्त) XII.2

19. देवेभ्यो हि प्रथमं यज्ञियेभ्यो अमृतत्वं सुवसि भागमुत्तमम्।
आत् इत् दामानं सवितर् व्यूर्णुषे अनूचीना जीविता मानुषेभ्यः।। ऋग्वेद IV.54.2

20. यथा अहानि अनुपूर्व भवंति यथ ऋतवः ऋतुभिः यं तु साधु।
यथा न पूर्वम् अपरो जहाति एवा धातर् आयूंषि कल्पय एषाम्।। ऋग्वेद X.18.5

21. मृत्योः पदं योपयंतो यदैत द्राघीय आयुः प्रतरं दधानाः।
आप्यायमानाः प्रजया धनेन शुद्धाः पूता भवत यज्ञियासः।। ऋग्वेद X.18.2

22. इमं जीवेभ्यः परिधिं दधामि मैषां नु गादपरो अर्थमेतम्।
शतं जीवंतु शरदः पुरूचीरंतर्मृत्युं दधतां पर्वतेन।। ऋग्वेद X.18.4

23. अश्मन्वती रीयते सं रभध्वं उत्तिष्ठत प्र तरता सखायः।
अत्रा जहाम ये असन्नशेवाः शिवान् वयं उत्तरेमाभि वाजान्।। ऋग्वेद X.53.8

24. शनैश्चिदद्य सूर्येणादित्येन सहीयसा।
अहं यशस्विनां यशो विद्यारूपमुपा ददे।। ऋग्वेद (खिलसूक्त) I.1

25. ऋतावानं वैश्वानरमृतस्य ज्योतिषस्पतिम्।
अजस्रं धर्ममीमहे। उपयामगृहीतोऽसि वैश्वानराय त्वैष ते योनिर्वैश्वानराय त्वा।।
यजुर्वेद XXVI.6

26. आपस्पुत्रासो अभि सं विशध्वं इमं जीवं जीवधन्याः समेत्य।
तासां भजध्वं अमृतं यमाहुः यमोदनं पचति वां जनित्री।। अथर्ववेद XII.3.4

27. त्वमंग जरितारं यविष्ठ विश्वान्यग्ने दुरितानि पर्षि।
स्तेना अदृश्रन् रिपवो जनासो अज्ञातकेता वृजिना अभूवन्।।
इमे यामासस्त्वद्रिगभूवन् वसवे वा तदिदागो अवाचि।
नाहायमग्निरभिशस्तये नो न रीषते वावृधानः परा दात्। ऋग्वेद V.3.11, 12

28. मंत्रम् अखर्वम् सुधितम् सुपेशसम् दधात यज्ञियेषु आ।
पूर्वीः चन प्रसितयः तरंति तं य इंद्रे कर्मणा भुवत्।। ऋग्वेद VII.32.13

29. यं रक्षन्ति प्रचेतसो वरुणो मित्रो अर्यमा।
नू चित् स दभ्यते जनः।। ऋग्वेद I.41.1

30. तं वो महो महाय्यमिन्द्रं दानाय सक्षणिम्।
यो गाधेषु य आरणेषु हव्यो वाजेष्वस्ति हव्यः।। ऋग्वेद VIII.70.8

31. अग्निर्वृत्राणि जङ्घनद्द्रविणस्युर्विपन्यया।
समिद्धः शुक्र आहुतः।। ऋग्वेद VI.16.34

32. स नो बोधि पुरएता सुगेषूत दुर्गेषु पथिकृद् विदानः।
ये अश्रमास उरवो वहिष्ठा स्तेभिर्न इन्द्राभि वक्षि वाजम्।। ऋग्वेद VI.21.12

33. सोमस्य मित्रावरुणा उदिता सूर आ ददे।
तत् आतुरस्य भेषजम्।। ऋग्वेद VIII.72.17

34. आ न ऊर्जं वहतमश्विना युवं मधुमत्या नः कशया मिमिक्षतम्।
प्रायुस्तारिष्टं नी रपांसि मृक्षतं सेधतं द्वेषो भवतं सचाभुवा।। ऋग्वेद I.157.4

35. अहं सो अस्मि यः पुरा सुते वदामि कानि चित्।
तं मा व्यंत्याध्यो वृको न तृष्णजं मृगं, वित्तं मे अस्य रोदसी।।
सं मा तपंत्यभितः सपत्नीरिव पर्शवः।
मूषो न शिश्ना व्यदंति माध्यः स्तोतारं ते शतक्रतो, वित्तं मे अस्य रोदसी।।
ऋग्वेद I.105.7, 8

36. मा नो अज्ञाता वृजना दुराध्यो माशिवासो अवक्रमुः।
त्वया वयं प्रवतः शश्वतीरपोऽति शूर तरामसि।। ऋग्वेद VII.32.27

37. देव सवितः प्र सुव यज्ञं प्र सुव यज्ञपतिं भगाय।
दिव्यो गन्धर्वः केतपूः केतं नः पुनातु वाचस्पतिर्वाचं नः स्वदतु।। यजुर्वेद XXX.I

38. यदाशसा निःशसाभिशसोपारिम जाग्रतो यत् स्वपंतः।
अग्निर्विश्वान्यप दुष्कृतान्यजुष्टान्यारे अस्मद् दधातु।। ऋग्वेद X.164.3

39. यद्विद्वांसो यदविद्वांस एनांसि चकृमा वयम्।
यूयं नस्तस्मान्मुञ्चत विश्वे देवाः सजोषसः।।
यदि जाग्रत् यदि स्वपन् एन एनस्योऽकरम्।
भूतं मा तस्माद्भव्यं च द्रुपदादिव मुञ्चताम्।। अथर्ववेद VI.115.1, 2

40. उत देवा अवहितं देवा उन्नयथा पुनः।
उतागश्चक्रुषं देवा जीवयथा पुनः।। ऋग्वेद X.137.1

41. न तमंहो न दुरितानि मर्त्यमिंद्रावरुणा न तपः कुतश्चन।
यस्य देवा गच्छथो वीथो अध्वरं न तं मर्तस्य नशते परिह्वृतिः।।
अर्वाङ्नरा दैव्येनावसा गतं शृणुतं हवं यदि मे जुजोषथः।
युवोर्हि सख्यमुत वा यदाप्यं मार्डीकमिंद्रावरुणा नि यच्छतम्।।
ऋग्वेद VII.82.7, 8

42. त्वं हि विश्वतोमुख विश्वतः परिभूरसि। अप नः शोशुचदघम्।।
द्विषो नो विश्वतोमुखाति नावेव पारय। अप नः शोशुचदघम्।। ऋग्वेद I.97.6,7

43. उदुत्तमं वरुण पाशं अस्मद् अवाधमं वि मध्यमं श्रथाय।
अथा वयमादित्य व्रते तव अनागसो अदितये स्याम।। ऋग्वेद I.24.15

44. विश्वानि देव सवितर् दुरितानि परा सुव।
यत् भद्रं तत् न आ सुव।। ऋग्वेद V.82.5

45. तमित् सखित्व ईमहे तं राये तं सुवीर्ये।
स शक्र उत नः शकदिंद्रो वसुदयमानः।। ऋग्वेद I.10.6

46. इन्द्रो दिव इन्द्र ईशे पृथिव्या इन्द्रो अपामिन्द्र इत् पर्वतानाम्।
इन्द्रो वृधामिन्द्र इन्मेधिराणामिन्द्रः क्षेमे योगे हव्य इन्द्रः।। ऋग्वेद I.89.10

47. बलं धेहि तनूषु नो बलमिंद्रानळुत्सु नः।
बलं तोकाय तनयाय जीवसे त्वं हि बलदा असि।। ऋग्वेद III.53.18

48. तं नो अग्ने मघवद्भ्यः पुरुक्षुं रयिं नि वाजं श्रुत्यं युवस्व।
वैश्वानर महि नः शर्म यच्छ रुद्रेभिरग्ने वसुभिः सजोषाः।। ऋग्वेद VII.5.9

49. य एक इद् विदयते वसु मर्ताय दाशुषे।
ईशानो अप्रतिष्कुत इन्द्रो अङ्ग।। ऋग्वेद I.84.7

50. ऋभुक्षणमिन्द्रमा हुव ऊतय ऋभून् वाजान् मरुतः सोमपीतये।
उभा मित्रावरुणा नूनमश्विना ते नो हिन्वन्तु सातये धिये जिषे।। ऋग्वेद I.111.4

51. इंद्रं परे अवरे मध्यमास इंद्रं यांतो अवसितास इंद्रम्।
इंद्रं क्षियंत उत युध्यमाना इंद्रं नरो वाजयंतो हवंते।। ऋग्वेद IV.25.8

52. यदिंद्र पूर्वो अपराय शिक्षन्नयज्यायान् कनीयसो देष्णम्।
अमृत इत् पर्यासीत दूरमाचित्र चित्र्यं भरा रयिं नः।। ऋग्वेद VII.20.7

53. द्वे सुवी अशृणवं पितृणां अहं देवानां उत मर्त्यानाम्।
ताभ्यामिदं विश्वं एजत् समेति यत् अंतरा पितरं मातरं च।। ऋग्वेद X.88.15

54. भद्रात् अधि श्रेयः प्रेहि बृहस्पतिः पुर एता ते अस्तु।
अथेममस्या वर आ पृथिव्या आरेशत्रुं कृणुहि सर्ववीरम्।। अथर्ववेद VII.8.1

55. अभूत् उ पारं एतवे पंथा ऋतस्य साधुया।
अदर्शि वि सुतिर्दिवः।। ऋग्वेद I.46.11

56. तमिद् धनेषु हितेष्वधिवाकाय हवंते।
येषामिंद्रस्ते जयंति।। ऋग्वेद VIII.16.5

57. दर्शं नु विश्वदर्शतं दर्शम् रथम् अधि क्षमि।
एता जुषत मे गिरः।। ऋग्वेद I.25.18

58. यस्ते अग्ने सुमतिं मर्तो अक्षत् सहसः सूनो अति स प्र शृण्वे।
इषं दधानो वहमानो अश्वैरा स द्युमाँ अमवान् भूषति द्यून्।। ऋग्वेद X.11.7

59. ऋतं वोचे नमसा पृच्छ्यमानः तवाशसा जातवेदो यदीदम्।
त्वमस्य क्षयसि यद्ध विश्वं दिवियदु द्रविणं यत् पृथिव्याम्।।
किं नो अस्य द्रविणं कद्ध रत्नं वि नो वोचो जातवेदश्चिकित्वान्।
गुहाध्वनः परमं यन्नो अस्य रेकु पदं न निदाना अगन्म।। ऋग्वेद IV.5.11, 12

60. नूनं तदिंद्र दद्धि नो यत् त्वा सुन्वन्त ईमहे।
रयिं नश्चित्रमा भरा स्वर्विदम्।। ऋग्वेद VIII.13.5

61. तत् ते सहस्व ईमहे दात्रं यन्नोपदस्यति।
त्वदग्ने वार्यं वसु।। ऋग्वेद VIII.43.33

62. सूरिरसि वर्चोधा असि तनूपानोऽसि।
आप्नुहि श्रेयांसमति समं क्राम।।
शुक्रोऽसि भ्राजोऽसि स्वऽरसि ज्योतिरसि।
आप्नुहि श्रेयांसमति समं क्राम।। अथर्ववेद II.11.4, 5

63. तरणिर्विश्वदर्शतो ज्योतिष्कृदसि सूर्य।
विश्वमा भासि रोचनम्।।
प्रत्यङ् देवानां विशः प्रत्यङ् उदेषि मानुषान्।
प्रत्यङ् विश्वं स्वर्दृशे।। ऋग्वेद I.50.4, 5

64. अश्याम तं काममग्ने तवोती अश्याम रयिं रयिवः सुवीरम्।
अश्याम वाजमभि वाजयंतो अश्याम द्युम्नमजराजरं ते।। ऋग्वेद VI.5.7

65. सना ज्योतिः सना स्वर्विश्वा च सोम सौभगा।
अथा नो वस्यसस्कृधि।। ऋग्वेद IX.4.2

66. सत्यमिद् वा उ तं वयमिंद्रं स्तवाम नानृतम्।
महाँ असुन्वतो वधो भूरि ज्योतींषि सुन्वतो भद्रा इंद्रस्य रातयः।। ऋग्वेद VIII.62.12

67. तमीमह इंद्रम् अस्य रायः।
पुरुवीरस्य नृवतः पुरुक्षोः।।
यो अस्कृधोयुः अजरः स्वर्वान्।
तमा भर हरिवो मादयध्यै।। ऋग्वेद VI.22.3

68. तव क्रत्वा तवोतिभिर्ज्योक् पश्येम सूर्यम्।
अथा नो वस्यसस्कृधि।। ऋग्वेद IX.4.6

69. दृते दृं ह मा ज्योक्ते संदृशि जीव्यासम् ज्योक्ते संदृशि जीव्यासम्।। यजुर्वेद XXXVI.19

70. इंद्र मृळ मह्यं जीवातुमिच्छ चोदय धियम् अयसो न धाराम्।
यत् किं चाहं त्वायुरिदं वदामि तत् जुषस्व कृधि मा देववंतम्।। ऋग्वेद VI.47.10

71. अभी नो अर्ष दिव्या वसून्यभि विश्वा पार्थिवा पूयमानः।
अभि येन द्रविणमश्नवामाभ्यार्षेयं जमदग्निवन्नः।। ऋग्वेद IX.97.51

72. कुवित् मा गोपां करसे जनस्य कुविद् राजानं मघवन् ऋजीषिन्।
कुवित् म ऋषिं पपिवांसं सुतस्य कुवित् मे वस्वो अमृतस्य शिक्षाः।। ऋग्वेद III.43.5

73. यत्र देवा ब्रह्मविदो ब्रह्म ज्येष्ठमुपासते।
यो वै तान् विद्यात् प्रत्यक्षं स ब्रह्मा वेदितास्यात्।। अथर्ववेद X.7.24

74. आ तू न इंद्र कौशिक मंदसानः सुतं पिब।
नव्यमायुः प्र सू तिर कृधी सहस्रसाम् ऋषिम्।। ऋग्वेद I.10.11

75. यस्त्वा हृदा कीरिणा मन्यमानो अमर्त्यं मर्त्यो जोहवीमि।
जातवेदो यशो अस्मासु धेहि प्रजाभिः अग्ने अमृतत्वमश्याम्।। ऋग्वेद V.4.10

76. सम्राजावस्य भुवनस्य राजथो मित्रावरुणा विदथे स्वर्दृशा।
वृष्टिं वां राधो अमृतत्वमीमहे द्यावापृथिवी वि चरन्ति तन्यवः।। ऋग्वेद V.63.2

77. विवस्वान्नो अमृतत्वे दधातु परैतु मृत्युरमृतं न ऐतु।
इमान् रक्षतु पुरुषाना जरिम्णो मो ष्वे षामसवो यमं गुः।।
अथर्ववेद XVIII.3.62

78. आभूषेण्यं वो मरुतो महित्वनं दिदृक्षेण्यं सूर्यस्येव चक्षणम्।
उतो अस्माँ अमृतत्वे दधातन शुभं यातामनु रथा अवृत्सत।। ऋग्वेद V.55.4

79. यदस्मृति चकृम किं चित् अग्ने उपारिम चरणे जातवेदः।
ततः पाहि त्वं नः प्रचेतः शुभे सखिभ्यो अमृतत्वमस्तु नः।। अथर्ववेद VII.106.1

80. विद्यां चाविद्यां च यस्तद्वेदोभयम् सह।
अविद्यया मृत्युं तीर्त्वा विद्ययामृतमश्नुते।। यजुर्वेद XL.14

81. इदं ह नूनमेषां सुम्नं भिक्षेत मर्त्यः। आदित्यानामपूर्व्यं सवीमनि।।
ये चिद्धि मृत्युबंधव आदित्या मनवः स्मसि। प्र सू न आयुर्जीवसे तिरेतन।।
ऋग्वेद VIII.18.1, 22

82. यदि वीरो अनुष्यात् अग्निमिंधीत मर्त्यः।
आजुह्वत् हव्य मानुषक् शर्म भक्षीत दैव्यम्।। सामवेद 82

83. तत् अस्य प्रियं अभि पाथो अश्यां नरो यत्र देवयवो मदंति।
उरुक्रमस्य स हि बंधुर् इत्था विष्णोः पदे परमे मध्वः उत्सः।। ऋग्वेद I.154.5

84. धामन् ते विश्वं भुवनमधि श्रितम् अंतः समुद्रे हृद्यंतरायुषि।
अपामनीके समिथे य आभृतः तमश्याम मधुमंतं त ऊर्मिम्।। ऋग्वेद IV.58.11

85. तमु ष्टुहि यो अंतः सिंधौ सूनुः।
सत्यस्य युवानम् अद्रोघवाचम् सुशेवम्।। अथर्ववेद VI.1.2

86. यस्मिन् वृक्षे मध्वदः सुपर्णा निविशंते सुवते चाधि विश्वे।
तस्येदाहुः पिप्पलं स्वाद्वग्रे तन्नोन्नशद्यः पितरं न वेद।। ऋग्वेद I.164.22

87. न हि अंग नृतो त्वद् अन्यं विंदामि राधसे।
राये द्युम्नाय शवसे च गिर्वणः।। ऋग्वेद VIII.24.12

88. एन्दो पार्थिवं रयिं दिव्यं पवस्व धारया।
द्युमन्तं शुष्ममा भर। ऋग्वेद IX.29.6

89. इन्द्राग्नी युवोरपि वसु दिव्यानि पार्थिवा।
आ न इह प्र यच्छतं रयिं विश्वायुपोषसम्।। ऋग्वेद VI.59.9

90. सं या दानूनि येमथुर्दिव्याः पार्थिवीरिषः।
नभस्वतीरा वां चरन्तु वृष्टयः।। ऋग्वेद VIII.25.6

91. पुनरेहि वाचस्पते देवेन मनसा सह।
वसोष्पते नि रमय मयि एव अस्तु मयि श्रुतम्।। अथर्ववेद I.1.2

92. यमोदनं प्रथमजा ऋतस्य प्रजापतिः तपसा ब्रह्मणे अपचत्।
यो लोकानां विधृतिः न अभिरेषात् तेन ओदनेन अति तराणि मृत्युम्।।
येनातरन्भूतकृतोऽति मृत्युं यमन्वविंदन् तपसा श्रमेण।
यं पपाच ब्रह्मणे ब्रह्म पूर्वम्, तेन ओदनेन अति तराणि मृत्युम्।।
यस्मात् पक्वात् अमृतं संबभूव यो गायत्र्या अधिपतिर्बभूव।
यस्मिन् वेदा निहिता विश्वरूपाः तेन ओदनेन अति तराणि मृत्युम्।।
अथर्ववेद IV.35.1, 2, 6

93. आयुर्यज्ञेन कल्पताम् प्राणो यज्ञेन कल्पताम् चक्षुः यज्ञेन कल्पताम्।
श्रोत्रं यज्ञेन कल्पताम् पृष्ठं यज्ञेन कल्पताम् यज्ञो यज्ञेन कल्पताम्।
प्रजापतेः प्रजा अभूम, स्वर्देवाः अगन्म, अमृता अभूम।। यजुर्वेद IX.21

CHAPTER II

Moral Preparation

A house is cleansed of cobwebs and is re-decorated for the visit of an important guest. Per chance the guest may not turn up; but the host knows that it is risky to allow things to be topsy-turvy and in a state of unpreparedness. Will not the visitor be unhappy? Will he not even go back? Tulasidāsa has already warned us that God Nārāyaṇa may visit us at any time and in any guise. A conscientious house-holder will always keep every thing ready with expectation and hope of the guest making his appearance any moment. So does an earnest aspirant. He makes his mind, body, intellect and speech pure by shedding vices and beautifies his soul by inculcating virtues. Eternal vigilance, thus, is the price we have to pay for not missing divine visitation. This constitutes moral preparation and it makes a devotee worthy of the lofty nearness of the Divine. On our way to God, this tilling of the ground needs be given the status of a loyal companion. Though we have to traverse the route all by ourselves, we can not refuse the helping hand of the companion, nor can leave him in the middle of the course. Similarly moral equipment makes us more and more fit to enter into the kingdom of God. Ethical ripening is never complete and goes on ever developing as we continue our journey. The process of bettering ourselves is so inseparable from other observances for spiritual progress, that it is more apt to say that we improve ourselves by trodding the moral path. We shall see how the training of mind occupies the initial stage. The fickle mind has to be subjected to a two-way treatment — washing out vices like idleness, sleep or passions and decorating by virtues like truth, purity, continence and so on. We shall next take up the topic of moral standard. Rule of law, rule of God and self-rule are the classical candidates, whose worth is to be tested. In the end we shall take note of significance of moral readiness in spiritual life.

1. Mind and its Control. First and foremost, it is man's mind which needs purification. It is endowed with tremendous speed and an unobstructed entrance to the remotest corner of the universe. Assisted by the sense-organs, it goes on desiring a myriad of objects; it thinks its own thoughts and spins its own doubts. In a word, it is engaged in all activities except the one that will lead one God-ward. Hence the necessity of curbing its activities, imposing controls on it, and putting it on the proper track. Thus the prayer of Pracetas Āngirasa runs: "My mind is engaged in thousand and one activities. Oh, instigator of the mind! Vanish from my sight, go far far away. See that the goddess of evil does not cast her shadow here. My mind touches innumerable objects. Men ought to desire only that which is auspicious and obtain the highest blessing. I crave for a blissful sight of Vaivasvata" (S.1). "Some of your speculations are auspicious while some are inauspicious. You can contain all thoughts within you" (S.2). This Mantra refers to a very peculiar characteristic of our mind. It wishes for all pleasurable things and even works under the delusion that it *has* all that was longed for. This is just day-dreaming or wishful-thinking. At the same time it entertains ghastliest ideas which even its worst enemy would shudder to think of. Sometimes it is at the peak of a mountain while the next moment it is at the bottom of a vale — all by imagination. Thus some of its words are auspicious while others speak of ill omens. It is well-known that the senses are immersed in external objects that provide pleasure. Naturally they turn away from God. The mind usually keeps their company. But such is the uncontrollable force and unstableness of the mind that perhaps purifying the senses may become easier than keeping the mind steady. "My ears long to hear the voice of God and my eyes long to see that flame of light lodged in the heart. But the mind wanders in yonder regions. What words should I speak and what thoughts should I entertain?" (S.3). The first task an aspirant is faced with, is to make the mind steady by arresting its unhindered wanderings. The roamings will come to an end if its thirst for objects disappears; and so catharsis of the mind from greed, comes to be the initial concern of every one. "If a devotee oft and on sweeps clean his mind, Soma will get for him an invaluable gift of jewels" (S.4). The jewel stands for spiritual

experience and that can be had only by a spotless mind. "Drive away diseases and agonies from us; destroy the wicked people; and purge our mind of all evil ideas. Oh, Ādityas, keep us away from sin. Take the vengeful aggressors far from us, correct our thoughtlessness and make hatred evaporate from our minds. Bless us with joy and peace which will free a committed sinner from his black motives" (S.5). There is also a prayer by the sage Tapumūrdhan Bārhaspatya for the removal of three types of evil — moral, psychological and physical (S.6).

Spiritual literature in every land recommends company of the good as an antidote to mind's evil thoughts. Saints and sages exert their influence on the minds of ordinary men so that the latter are ashamed to sin in their company. "Both Indra and Vāyu are welcome guests; and so I invite them amidst us. All our friends will be filled with wholesome ideas in their company" (S.7). "Let all gods with noble minds assemble here for the celebration of the sacrifice originated by Viśvakarman, the architect of the universe. To the presiding deity of the sacrifice, who is as if the eye or mouth or supporter of the sacrifice, I offer oblations with the power of my speech, power of audition and power of mind" (S.8). With such a welcome bent to the mind, spiritual life becomes possible.

The rinsing of the mind, however, is effected not merely by removing evil deliberations but by filling it with sacred ones. Mind's very nature is to entertain ideas and it is next to impossible to empty it of dirty cerebrations. It must have some ideas which it goes on chewing, for it abhors a vacuum. So trying to flush the debris of unhealthy ideas from the mind is an exercise in futility so long as no good ideas are provided to it to sport with. The most profitable way is to feed it with virtuous reflections. Thus the common prayer of saints for going beyond the mind must be understood in this positive way. The expressions Amana or Amanaska (metamorphosing mind into no-mind), Manolaya, or Manamagna-yoga (absorption of mind into itself) or Unmana (transcending the mind) do not imply a negative concept of a vacant mind. They imply concentration of mind on God. Deep meditation may lead to less and less mental modifications when the mind becomes steady. Therefore, the first

step on the way is to divert mind's energies from its usual pleasure-seeking machinations and direct them towards pious cognitions. Though the mind is ever restless, it is amenable to discipline; though it is happiness-loving, it is at the same time, appreciative of high ideals. Many anthems are a pointer to the deep insight of a Vedic Ṛṣi into the nature of mind, its enormous fund of energy and the possibility of harnessing that energy for carrying out any job whatsoever. Modern psychology terms this process as sublimation, the Vedic seer called it turning Godwards. "Oh Soma, make our mind holy, wise and dutiful. You are great; let us delight in the warmth of your heart as cattle in green pastures" (S.9). By far the most beautiful passage for the re-channelisation of mind's energies is a cluster of Śivasankalpa Mantras. These psalms do not refer to the monkeyish pranks of the mind at all; on the other hand they mention only its vast capability of executing a large number of good deeds. The mind referred to here has undergone austerities and is completely sublimated and ennobled. We get here a picture of the wonders it can work when properly educated. The lines, laced with music, enthrone the mind and we feel as if we are reading about the exploits of a well-groomed, mature intellect and not about the proverbially unsteady mind. It is only the perorative refrain, namely, तन्मे मनः शिवसंकल्पमस्तु which reminds us that the stanzas refer to the mind. Here, if anywhere, we see how mind can go beyond itself. "That which traverses long distances while awake as also during sleep, that which is the light of lights, may that mind of mine be absorbed in noble thoughts. That with which wise people accomplish their tasks and excel in assemblies and sacrificial duties, that mysterious spirit residing inside all beings, may that mind of mine be absorbed in noble thoughts. That which is knowledge and intellect, as well as strength, that which is the immortal light in the hearts, that without which no work whatsoever can be undertaken, may that mind of mine be absorbed in noble thoughts. That immortal principle which comprehends both the past and the future, that which helps the accomplishment of the sacrifice performed by seven sacrificers, may that mind of mine be absorbed in noble thoughts. That in which Ṛgveda, Sāmaveda and Yajurveda are established as spokes in a wheel, that which enters into every single activity of people, may that

mind of mine be absorbed in noble thoughts. That which guides men's deeds as the charioteer guides the movements of his horses, that which is speedy and deathless and which inhabits the hearts, may that mind of mine be absorbed in noble thoughts" (S.10).

2. Avoidance of Vices. We saw that a two-way treatment is involved as regards purification of mind. In the first place we have to remove rotten and impure ideas from it and secondly we have to fill it up with immaculate ones. The two processes are simultaneous and not successive; they are also inter-dependent in that both of them are complementary and work together for the furtherance of the ideal. The first process is avoidance of vices and the second, cultivation of virtues. Avoidance of vices is easier said than done because it is like swimming against the stream. The mind's energies are flowing along with the current of propensities or mental inclinations, says William James. To go the way of impulses, you do not need any effort. It is action in the line of least resistance. But to reach the ideal, propensities are to be overcome. Now psychologically the ideal does not possess a sufficient moving force. That force is to be augmented by our effort and maintained in the face of resistance from natural tendencies. Thus moral action is action in the line of greatest resistance. The smallest temptation is enough to induce a man to lay down his oars and the boat goes down tossing aimlessly along the swirling waters of passions and in a moment nullifies man's perseverence. A constant vigil is called for to maintain the tenacity of effort and redouble it when necessary.

Our infirmities are generally taken to be a result of excess of Tamas which gives rise to ignorance and blunder. We shall consider the vices in some convenient groups; but it does not mean that they are exclusive of each other, nor is the list exhaustive. Vices are good companions of each other and if one vice is operating, others willingly extend their help. Thus any bad act can be said to be due to different obliquities acting severally or collectively. Again their constitution and even garbs are so similar that a wrong action can as justifiably be said to be a result of lust (Kāma) as of avarice (Lobha). We may first consider the defects that are predominantly physical, i.e., idleness and sleep; then take up the group which is

traditionally known as Ṣaḍripus or six enemies of man. We shall then deal with bad habits that a man develops and bad company that he is lured to. All of them are great impediments and need purging.

(a) Idleness and Sleep. "The heavens build the house of the body with various constituents. The wise man treats different colours in different ways. He heightens the glory of the radiant, offers the red to the sacrifice and removes the black" (S.11). The body is constituted of three elements — Sattva, Rajas and Tamas. The words used in the Mantra are रुशती लोहिनी and कृष्णा; they are colours indicating the elements. The wise person glorifies Sattva, sacrifices Rajas and destroys Tamas. The prayer of Ṛṣi Gṛtsamada is: "Let me not be troubled by idleness in my devotions nor should I be a victim of lethargy. I should never try to avoid my duty of straining Soma, nor should I even speak such a thing by word of mouth. For, God fulfils my desires, blesses me with riches, alerts my intellect and brings me on to a proper path" (S.12). Tiredness, warn psychologists, is more imaginary than real. We feel tired because we are habituated to feel tired; but with a little determination, we can defer the point of fatigue and carry on work for some more time. Idleness is the greatest enemy of man which destroys his physical well-being and wealth. It also spells his spiritual ruin. Earning riches and using them righteously are very important. If one is given to inactivity even gods do not care for him. "I hate him who is indolent as well as him who does not know how to utilise his wealth properly. Both of them meet with destruction" (S.13). "Gods love him who strains Soma. They do not like men who sleep away their time. They are themselves alert and correct man's faults" (S.14). "He who disobeys you and is absorbed in sleep will perish of his own short-comings. Oh Indra, preserve your bounties for him who toils to offer Soma" (S.15). Ignorance and addiction to vices are reciprocally related; they increase each other's strength. Ordinarily a cause remains a cause, and effect, effect. A cause does not become an effect or vice versa. Kant, however, popularised the concept of reciprocal causality. A backlash from the effect influences the cause in turn. Therefore, in a sense, the effect becomes cause and the cause becomes effect. Reciprocity thus implies that two events are inter-influencing and

become causes and effects of each other. Thus out of ignorance man takes to bad habits, and bad habits in turn cloud his intellect. "Oh Varuṇa it is not solely my will that is responsible for my sins. Liquors, anger, gambling and thoughtlessness all contribute to them. Even an elder leads one astray. A dream is sometimes sufficient to seduct a man", observes the sage Maitrāvaruṇi Vasiṣṭha (S.16). This Mantra calls for two comments. (i) If not his own will, we may ask, whose will is it, any way, that is responsible for the vicious act? Bad habits like liquor are not an external agency; it is the individual who allows himself to lapse into them. Rather than blame them, one should blame oneself, and own the responsibility of misbehaviour. The Vedic seer, however, fully knows human nature of passing on to others the accountability of evil-doing. (ii) The Vedic Ṛṣi here shows a wonderful insight into the power which a dream possesses. Sometimes dream-experiences cause fear and even drive a person mad. At times, in a dream many an insoluble problem is solved. At the same time, instances are not wanting when a person receives spiritual blessings in a dream-state. On the whole, a dream-experience should not be brushed aside as merely hallucinatory. We may call a dream unreal, but it causes effects that are real and one has to enjoy or suffer them. It is remarkable that our forefathers knew long ago what a dream can do, when the science of psychology was yet to be born.

(b) The Six Passions. Kāma (lust), Krodha (anger), Lobha (avarice), Moha (infatuation), Mada (pride) and Matsara (jealousy) look to be a paltry number of six. But they are a man's undoing. Of them, Kāma is the most powerful one. Lust for varied sense-objects makes a man blind to his real good. Hence the necessity of curbing desires in general. And wants know no end. "This offering is meant for Agni who is called Kāma or desire. He is consumer of all things in the universe (Viśvāt), He is both a giver and taker. He is powerful and intelligent. He is an irrespressible wanderer. May Savitṛ who wears gold ornaments on his hands, Indra, Bṛhaspati, Varuṇa, Mitra, Agni, Viśwedevas and Angirasa hear my supplication to pacify this meat-eater", observes Ṛṣi Vasiṣṭha (S.17). A number of prayers speak of the sway of temptations over man. Aware of the fact that they are impediments on the way to moral and spiritual progress,

the Ṛṣi requests the deities to weed them out. "Let not the goddess of evil (Nirṛti) who is ever-increasing in strength, overpower us. Let her be destroyed along with our thirst for objects" (S.18). "The two black vultures soar in the sky. They increase our sorrow and famish our body. They inflict pain on us. I cross over them like a tired ox or cow, like a barking dog or like an invading wolf" (S.19). The two vultures are longing and avarice which the Ṛṣi is confident of controlling. "Oh Agni, disarm him with your weapons. The enemy wants to make slaves of us by means of eyes, mind or thought, i.e. by offering seductive objects to different senses. I offer the whole of myself for the sake of liberation" (S.20). Apparently for this sage as for Spinoza, freedom from appetites is itself freedom from human bondage. Cupidities are a bondage; control over them, is freedom. Man as belonging to the realm of nature, is bound to be under the thumb of wants; but as a member of the realm of ends, he must rise above them. "After all, we are petty mortals and shall hanker after pleasures. But Oh wielder of the thunderbolt, raise us above them and make us perfect" (S.21). "Many are our fancies but in the presence of Soma, I pray to gods to forgive us for our short-comings" (S.22). The things which we covet have a power of allurement and man has to fortify himself if he has to combat them. "Agasti performed austerities which were hard as digging with a spade. He also pined after progeny and strength. But he by his great power conquered both material wealth and spiritual good" (S.23). There has been a specific mention of the sex-instinct, indulgence in which leads to a man's down-fall. "Oh Indra, let the male and the female demons be done to death. Let them, whose sport it is to sabotage a man's onward march, be beheaded. Let them not even live till sunrise" (S.24). "May not the ghouls demolish our efforts. May not the enemies inhabiting inside, attack us. The noble Indra wishes to rule over men of different natures. Let not those given to sex come near our sacrifice" (S.25).

(c) Other Temptations. Different kinds of craving which lay waste man's moral effort, are mentioned as deadly foes. All of them stem from greed which is the root cause. They are only new styles in which appetite covers up its scheming. We shall note in the sequel a few of them. The eclogues are directed against these frailties; they

pray to deities to wash off the same and express the conviction that he who possesses purity, is helped by God. "Disregard him who pours Soma in anger or drinks it in an unholy place. Partake of the offerings given by us" (S.26). "He who offers food to a hungry man lingering at the door for a morsel of food, is really generous. He obtains the fruit of sacrifice. Even adversaries become his friends. The rich should always give in charity which takes them on to the right path. Verily money always changes hands just as the wheels of a chariot always move. Wealth in the hands of an avarice-ridden man is unfruitful. He who eats by himself without giving to the gods and to the deserving, verily eats sin. It is like poison", are the words of Ṛṣi Bhikṣu Āngirasa (S.27). "Bound by the infatuating strings of worldly life, this man is struggling hard and is looking eagerly for deliverance. Pray, Oh Agni, release him from shackles. It is only when he becomes free from blinding temptations that he will be a blessed recipient of divine illumination" (S.28). When a man is under the sway of anger, avarice or craving, his intellect is clouded, discrimination dimmed and generosity blunted. There is back-sliding in his moral life and he becomes a victim of other weaknesses like pride and jealousy. "He who strains Soma for Indra day and night, receives his grace. But he who is proud of his progeny, who vainly decks his body or enjoys the company of the base, is forsaken by Indra" (S.29). "Come one, come all. Let us praise Indra who possesses treasures and is luminous. His love will save us from the dreary effects of pride" (S.30). "We wipe out from your heart the first wave of jealousy and the wave that comes next. We sweep your heart clean of that root of sorrow. As the earth possesses a mind that is but dead or more dead than dead or as the mind of a dying person is already dead, so is the mind of a jealous person. We rout out jealousy from your mind which is narrow and which is liable to fall" (S.31). The dead mind here indicates the hardened mind of a jealous person or a mind that is completely devoid of any softness of love. "Soma, you are our armour, wide and strong to protect us from the hateful mischiefs wrought by the enemies residing within our body as well as brought by those that are outside" (S.32). All the six fancies are mentioned in one Mantra which finds these vices in the animal world. The verse desires their removal from man's

mind. "Oh Indra, kill him who like a sparrow is given to lust; kill him who like a wolf is given to anger; kill him who like a vulture is given to avarice; kill him who like an owl is given to infatuation; kill him who like an eagle is given to pride; kill him who like a dog is given to hatred. Kill the demons with a stone" (S.33). God knows our motives for He is all-seer. He punishes the wicked and rewards the good. "Men can not earn a fortune by fraudulent means. Wealth frowns on him who is wicked. In fullness of time, illumination should be bestowed on a devotee like me" (S.34). Feeling sure that he knows God's ways, Ṛṣi Irimbiṭhi Kāṇva exclaims: "You know who is truthful and who is sinful. You stay where holiness resides" (S.35).

(d) Bad Habits. It is the reign of covetousness over the mind which results in a man's addiction to foul habits like gambling with dice. "The dice fall to the earth and then spring upwards. Themselves handless, they enslave a man who possesses hands. They are like magical coal, themselves cool, they burn the heart of the gamester" (S.36). "My resolution not to play dice is firm because dice-playing would attract censure from friends. But the sound of dice makes my resolution crumble and I run to the sinful gambling house after the manner of an unchaste woman" (S.37). It is such lapses, psychology tells us, that make slaves of us all. We wrongly think that one solitary lapse will not eat into our determination, but alas! it does. It throws us into the habit of making and breaking resolves and we become slaves of hungers and slaves of dirty habits. There is another psalm, which, instead of giving just negative advice of not doing evil acts, prescribes healthy substitutes. "The holy Savitṛ asked me to take to farming instead of running after gambling and take delight in what we get as a sufficient bounty. 'You will be blessed with a good wife, blessed with wealth and cattle', he said" (S.38). There are seven deadly sins from which a man should save himself. "The wise sages have prescribed seven rules. Breaking even one of them makes man a sinner. Agni who supervises the observance of these rules is present in all the worlds," warns the sage Trita Āptya (S.39). The seven sins are: drinking, gambling, sex, hunting, chastisement, cruelty and finding fault with others (पानं, अक्षाः, स्त्रियः, मृगया, दण्डः,

पारुष्यं, अन्यदूषणम्). A verse from Nirukta (VI.27) enumerates somewhat different sins: स्तेयं, तल्पारोहणं, ब्रह्महत्या, भ्रूणहत्या, सुरापानं, दुष्कृत-कर्मणां पुनः पुनः सेवा, पातके अनृतोद्यम् i.e. theft, sex, killing a Brahmin, killing a baby in the womb, drinking, repeatedly practising evil things and hiding one's sins. The warning is that a single one of these, is a stain on man's purity. What is more important is that a man should not remain off his guard under the impression that there is no witness to his sins, for Agni who is omnipresent, is the eternal witness. It is interesting to note that Mahatma Gandhi also warned the nation against seven sins :

1. Politics without principles,
2. Wealth without work,
3. Pleasure without conscience,
4. Knowledge without character,
5. Commerce without morality,
6. Science without humanity and
7. Worship without sacrifice.

An aspirant is always advised to avoid the company of the wicked and irreligious persons because it is very likely that he will stray away from his path of virtue because of them. "Pray, deliver us not unto the gangs of the robbers who cherish in their hearts ill-will towards gods. They will deprive us of our valuable possessions though we are harmless and straight-forward. We, your devotees, do not cherish any thing higher than an ardent love for you" (S.40). "Whisk away from our path the evil-minded, arrogant and deceitful men threatening to obstruct us without any provocation. Make our progress on the pathway to God smooth and comfortable. You are the protector of our person and a saviour who inspires us with encouraging words. Pray, destroy these revilers of God. Let not people be under the impression that even unrighteous men can taste the divine bliss" (S.41). Who are those whose company must particularly be avoided? "Agni drives them far away who have no will to work, who talk in riddles, whose tongue hurts others, the bargainers, the faithless, who go away from the path of rectitude or who disregard sacrifices. When Agni becomes the chief, he lowers

the status of those who do not perform any sacrifice" (S.42). Sins are committed by mind as by speech and he who talks ill of the gods should be kept away by devotees. "Those who shun the right path, like a brotherless woman, and who seek evil like a woman who betrays her husband, are sinners. It is they who entertain ugly thoughts or speak untruth, that have created hell" (S.43). Sāyaṇa has interpreted अनृताः as those whose minds are defiled and असत्याः as those whose speech is defiled. The company of those who revere truth is to be sought. "Any one will realise that they are quite justified who talk of justness and truth of Mitra and Varuṇa. If a weapon of the enemy has three sharp blades, Mitra and Varuṇa use weapons having four blades and vanquish the godless" (S.44). To hell with the haters of gods; victory to Truth.

3. Cultivation of Virtues. Morality is internal and not external; a person must *be* good and not merely *do* good; for, a man may well entertain immoral ideas in mind and still do apparently good actions by hand. Purity of motives, therefore, occupies a higher place in the scale. At the same time of what value a man's holy intentions be if they are not translated into action? It is true that a man's vision must be clear, but his action must also be imminent, so that the link between good thought and good action is not snapped. Generally, vices keep a right of way and retain occupation of the track of action; they fly past with gusto and leave virtues inert till the end of time. The fall-out from vices smothers virtues and leaves them pale and impotent. It is here that an extra force is to be applied to stimulate the holy thoughts to assume an imperative mood. A mere talk of banishing errors or even their actual removal will not be sufficient. Inculcation of pious wishes is only like a legislative body; it remains inert without an executive body. This latter is the practice of virtues, and constitutes the social aspect of moral preparation. As in the removal of faults, here also there is the psychological preliminary and that consists in filling the mind and reason with worthy thoughts and giving a healthy bent to them. "Oh Viṣṇu, bless us with an intention that is pure, and has the good of others before it. May we enjoy the treasures gained by such a mind" (S.45). "Oh Lord, may we have guileless brains as well as the company of great men" (S.46).

The Vedic sage is not satisfied with the friendship of the earthly, he aspires for the company of the heavenly figures. "The primary duty of man as a mortal being, is to develop the friendship of God, the supreme guide. In order to enjoy and fulfil the purpose of life one is required to win spiritual illumination" (S.47). It is God who is responsible for the constitution of man's abilities; even if man wants to fill the mind with God, the initiative should really come from the Eternal. "God became absorbed in the praises sung by devotees and the devotees became absorbed in praising Pūṣan who is a guardian of law. May he send healing forces to us, for, it is he who governs the wits of all" (S.48). The sage Aindra Vimada says: "Oh Agni, fill our breasts with noble thoughts. Your mind has gained the companionship with gods; pass on to us the noble nature of your heart. Give to the sage Vimada, right judgement, food, strength and wealth" (S.49).

No work on morality or religion would be complete without enumeration of virtues, be they individual or social. The Bhagavad-gītā has discussed the topic time and on. In the seventh canto of the Bhāgavata we find a similar listing of virtues. In the Vedas there is no separate section for the subject as in a systematised thesis; but references to different angelic qualities are seen throughout. "The earth is supported by truth, the heavens by the sun. The Ādityas are upheld by Ṛta and Soma rules supreme in heaven" (S.50) The earth continues in its course because there are noble people here. Kabir says: Had there been no saints in the world, the whole universe would have been burnt to ashes.

(a) Truth. "The great truth, the stern cosmic law, dedication, austerities or sacrifice are necessary for the maintenance of order on the earth. May that mother earth, who controls the past and the present, make available a wide area of work to us" (S.51). This refers to the necessity of uprightness in society, which is the field of activity of every person. "The wise know that there goes on a competition between truth and falsehood. Veracity is simple and that is protected by Soma. Deception is slain by him" (S.52). "May the creator of the earth not harm us, nor should the creator of heavens

harm us. The latter with truth as his order, brought into being the great sweet waters" (S.53). The sages had great faith in the powers of honesty and believed that it alone would win ultimately. But truthfulness was practised by gods alone, laments the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa and man made dishonesty his law (S.54). "Straightforwardness and crookedness had the same appearance. It was Prajāpati who discriminated between them. He inspired people to have faith in the former and distrust in the latter" (S.55). Here is presented a universal maxim that before actually taking to the just way it is utterly necessary to distinguish between right and wrong. Error comes in the guise of correctness; ignorance in the garb of knowledge; falsehood poses itself as truth; unreality as reality; and sin apes the style of holiness. These are the illusions in the fields of logic, psychology, epistemology, metaphysics and ethics respectively. The initial task before an aspirant is critical enquiry; then alone can the correct line of a healthy course be taken and stuck to. The diagnostic tool for such analysis is discrimination or Vyākaraṇa as mentioned in the Mantra. It came to be recognised as Viveka later on, and became one of the basic qualifications of an aspirant.

(b) Purity. This is another merit which is held in great respect. "Oh Soma, you have a purifying nature. You enter into all parts of the body of him who partakes of you. He who does not observe rites and austerities, can never obtain your sacred juice. They who perform sacrifices, get plenty of it. Purifier Soma, who is like a blazing fire to his enemies, has spread out in the heavens with glowing rays of light emanating from him; and the gushing currents of his juice which protect the pure, who ascend with inherent force, occupy the topmost region of heaven. The wonderful Āditya, the creator of gods, protects the heavens. Soma, with a noose in hands binds his enemies. Only they who are unsullied can drink the sweet nectar of Soma," asserts sage Pavitra Āngirasa (S.56). "Sovereigns though they are, they honour with love the gifts from the devotees. They are the most generous among generous and are always with those who are fair and sincere" (S.57). Gods do not forsake those who are guileless; they also wipe out whatever trace of impurity a person may have in him. This makes it possible for an aspirant to

get spiritual experience. "May waters, the mother of the universe sanctify us. May they carry away all unworthiness with their current. Thus cleansed I shall rise upwards" (S.58). A similar prayer for excellence is addressed to Soma. "It is but proper that we praise you by Uktha psalms, Oh killer of Vṛtra. Yourself holy, Oh majestic one, you make others holy" (S.59). Again, a host of gods are called upon to clear the mind of the aspirant. "Oh Soma, remove all that which causes fear, whether from near or from afar. May that all-creator Soma, make us untainted as he has powers of hunting sins from their hide-outs. Oh Agni, you possess sanctifying lustre; make our bodies sinless by it. Your rays reach all corners of space; rinse our minds clean by them so that we may strain the Soma juice. Oh Soma, rub out our lapses both by your correcting powers and by sacredness of the juice. Oh all-inspirer Soma and Agni, by your three radiant manifestations, Agni, Vāyu and Sūrya, make us holy. May Indra purify us and so may the Vasus. May all the gods purify me and Oh omniscient Agni, you also purify me" (S.60). The Yajurveda adds one more verse here: "Make me honourable Oh radiant Agni, by your crystal-clear holy light, especially in view of my proper observance of sacrificial rites" (S.61). One verse from the cluster of Ṛgveda Mantras just referred to, occurs also in Atharvaveda. Ṛṣi Śantāti puts the word चक्षसे in place of विश्वतः in the Mantra. The change makes a better reading. It means, 'make me spotless so that I may have a vision of you' (S.62). The Atharvaveda also adds another Mantra: "May the just lord give me rectitude so that with sufficient strength and proper understanding, I may be able to accomplish fully the purpose of life" (S.63).

(c) Austerities and Continence. These were given their due place in spiritual life. "We are undergoing austerities (Tapas), Oh Agni, they are austerities of a special kind. We follow what is prescribed in the holy texts. By these we shall enjoy long life and clear intellects," says Ṛṣi Atharvan (S.64). "Desirous of blessings I offer libations. I have gained sacred knowledge and am observing continence (Brahmacarya). May the gods make me happy" (S.65). "Through self-control and penance did the gods overcome death; through continence Indra gives valour to gods" (S.66). It is when a man comes at the cross-roads that he is baffled. Before him there

are two ways, one of goodness and the other of evil. The paths seem to be intertwined. Hence a supplication to God for right judgment. "Show me the two tracks separately, that of rectitude and that of crookedness by untying the knot and disentangling them. Flow unto me, Oh Soma, with a loud song on your tongue" (S.67). "May the Lord protect us and prevent us from going astray. May we be endowed with good health. Drinking of Soma should make me shine like a blazing fire. Let my analysis be sharp and enthusiasm growing" (S.68). Great importance was thus laid on moral behaviour (Sadācaraṇa) which includes many other saintly qualities in it. In fact, inner nobility expresses itself in exemplary conduct. The sage prays both for right intellect and right conduct — both for peerless thought and behaviour of sterling quality, Sumati and Sunīti. "You lead men by the proper route and do not allow sin and pain to touch them. You nullify the anger of haters of Brahman; this is a great achievement of yours, Oh Bṛhaspati" (S.69). If a man would just stick to the ethical path, he would get whatever is gain-worthy. "Oh Agni, give us that glory which is praiseworthy and which increases life. Victory and wealth, which many a man covets, can be obtained only by adhering to the clean course" (S.70). Those who value rectitude become the friends of gods. "Ṛbhus were really skilful and industrious. While yet human, they acquired Indra's friendship. They did not swerve from the laudable path. The sons of Sudhanvan were meritorious. By their conduct and their intelligence, they gained vast powers and became immortal" (S.71).

(d) Other Virtues. There are references to other virtues like charity, love, compassion etc. One nearly comes to entertain an anachronistic idea that the sage of the Vedas must have studied the Yoga-sūtras which mention all these virtues, before one remembers that the composition of Patanjali's aphorisms was still centuries away. "Those who are themselves enlightened, and look on the bound or the unlucky ones with compassion and help them, really deserve to be freed instantly by Viśvakarman, the friend of people" (S.72). The sound psychological truth couched in these words, should not be missed. We should not look on the unlucky with compassion merely with our minds (Manasā) but also with eyes (Cakṣuṣā). Now the term Cakṣuṣā by implication (Lakṣaṇā), exhorts

us to actively help the needy. Only mental sympathy, a mere inert sentimentality which does not prompt us to any action is hollow. Compassion lies in actually helping and not in filling one's own heart with empathetic feelings. Then there are psalms soaked in sweetness of honey both in words and meaning. "Let sweetness linger on the tip of my tongue (Jihvāyā agre madhu) as also on the root of it (Jihvā-mūle madhūlakam), let it fill my deeds and my mind. My behaviour may be sweet (Madhumat); my walking away be like-wise sweet and sweet be my speech. Let me be sweet honey inside and outside (Madhusandṛśa)", sings Ṛṣi Atharvan (S.73). "May my going away and coming back be sweet. Through your aids, oh Aświns, enrich our sweetness" (S.74). Tenderness in behaviour may be termed one of the most important of virtues. Like mercy, affection is twice blessed, it blesses him who exudes it and him who receives it. It calms down the mind and facilitates the reign of peace in the minds of both the giver and the receiver. On the contrary, anger is twice cursed; for, it not only harms the victim but also destroys the mental peace of the angry person. It is only with love that one can attract others to oneself. "A skilful charioteer drives his horses in whatever direction he pleases. Praise be to the reins which, remaining behind the horses attract their minds to themselves" (S.75). It is not the lifeless reins but the controller of these reins, i.e. the charioteer, who deserves credit for his loving action. Next comes charity. "He who pleases gods by his generosity lives in the highest heavens. He enters into the kingdom of gods. Rivers on the earth and in the heavens carry clarified butter to him. The earth is full of niceties for his sake. The riches in the world are meant for him who is liberal; the sun and the moon shine for him; the immortal position is reserved for him. They who give, increase their own life and the life of others. May those who donate things never suffer pain or blemish; not for them the disabled state of old age. All people will help them while the miserly suffer all misfortunes" (S.76). "The bestowers will never die or be destroyed. They are not pestered by sorrows. The earth and the heavens pour bounties on them" (S.77). "Those who spend their wealth for others' liberation (Rayīṣiṇaḥ) obtain bliss, position and wealth. He, who never performs a sacrifice (Avrataḥ) cannot obtain what he desires" (S.78). Rayīṣiṇaḥ is understood as Mokṣa-dhana-

kāmāḥ, i.e. those who sacrifice for the good of others and Avrataḥ as Paramārtha-prāpti-samkalpa-śūnyaḥ i.e. who has no thought for any charity.

(e) Social Virtues. Human nature was subjected to a search, both extensively and intensively, by the Vedic Ṛṣis. Mention of a wide variety of social virtues and the deep study of man's mental make-up, are proof of this. Atharvaveda enumerates qualities like performance of Vedic sacrifices, philanthropic works, truthfulness, modesty, benevolence, strength or tolerance (S.79). Incidentally, Vedic sacrifices (Iṣṭa) and philanthropic works (Pūrta) were not held in high esteem by the Upaniṣads as is clear from Muṇḍaka (I.2.10). and Praśna (I.9). Ṛgveda refers to respect for the moral law, devotion or austerities (S.80). There was unflinching faith in the efficacy and fruitfulness of the moral life. "We have reached the avenue of straight-forwardness which is easy to traverse. A traveller on this course gets wealth and his enemies are vanquished" declares the mystic Ṛjiśvan Bhāradvāja (S.81). "Those who have left off the ancient beat, and have refused to hear God's praises and have engaged themselves in unworthy acts, are really blind and deaf. They will never reach their goal" (S.82). Sāyaṇa has interpreted the term 'blind' as spiritually blind, i.e. those who do not see the good in others and the term 'deaf' as spiritually deaf, i.e. those who do not hear the praises of gods.

(f) Devotion, the Cardinal Virtue. Faith or devotion to God seems to be the cardinal virtue with the ancient moralist. "It is by faith that Agni is kindled, by faith offerings are made. We praise faith which occupies the top-most place. Gods, sacrificers and those who are protected by Vāyu, long for faith from the heart of their hearts. Riches are acquired by faith. We solicit faith in the morning, at midday and again in the evening, when the sun sets. Oh faith, be you our guide in this world." This is the invocation of the lady seer Śraddhā Kāmāyanī (S.83). The Munis were of great faith, their simple pastoral life moved round the pivot of faith or devotion. God was everything to them. "Only a devotee with upright behaviour is able to overcome his foemen. It is the worshipper of God who can subdue the ungodly adversaries. Only a competent warrior can make

short work of his opponents in battle. A devout soul alone can enjoy blissful fruit of worship, and not the one who worships not" (S.84). We are reminded time and again, that devotion will do everything for an aspirant. "Self-discipline helps in consecration; by consecration one rises up to great worthiness; by worthiness is conferred faith; and faith leads up to truth", assures the Ṛṣi (S.85). "All saintly men proclaim your loftiness. Their prosperity and their spiritual progress speak of your grace; for, they owe that to you. Oh great one, you are ever our friend, our father and mother, our very protector. All of us should know this well" (S.86). The devotee has to realise that God is the be-all and end-all, says the Mantra. The only course open to man is submission to God and this is the highest expression of devotion or Bhakti. Nimbārka, the great Vedāntin, has taken this Mantra as a Vedic authority for Śaraṇāgati or self-surrender. Thus is devotion the *facile princeps* among virtues; it crowns the moral preparation of a seeker.

4. The Moral Standard. We now come to a very important theoretical question in the science of morality — the question of moral standard. Who gives us the moral Law? To whom should we listen, so that we are within the approved orbit? Such queries receive different answers. Sometimes we are told that Ṛta or the cosmic principle is itself supreme. Thus instead of being only a metaphysical law, Ṛta comes to be recognised and respected as a metaphysico-moral authority. The second answer which suggest itself from a study of the Mantras, is that gods are supposed to be prescribing and setting forth norms and man's good lies in obeying them. Finally, we also find utterances where neither the eternal law of Ṛta is taken as a moral standard nor are the commands of gods; and the function of prescribing moral laws is reserved for oneself. The science of ethics terms these three alternatives as rule of Law, rule of God and rule of Self, respectively. The first two are heteronomous as the rule is external while the last is autonomous as the rule is internal. There is no elaborate discussion in the Vedas regarding the moral standard, but the suggestions in the Mantras are clear and imply all these theories. They are like raw diamonds waiting to be cut and polished before they send out the rays of theoretical wisdom.

(a) Rule of Law. We shall briefly consider all the three theories in the sequel. Coming to the rule of law, we find that there is an eloquent glorification of Ṛta, the supreme law, and copious descriptions of what it brings about in different spheres. Cosmologically it has absolute sway in the world of nature so that by its rules the trees remain green (S.87). Psychologically Ṛta offers great support to an aspirant because, "he who does not leave the territory of Ṛta, gets protection from Mitra, Aryamā or Varuṇa", assures the sage Manu Vaivasvata (S.88). It also helps a devotee go beyond his miseries. The exploits of Ṛta are no less significant in the field of morals. "Your costumes are, as if, made of light; your behaviour is spotless; no falsehood remains hidden from you, because, Oh Mitra and Varuṇa, you walk by the highway of Ṛta" (S.89). "It is they who take resort to Ṛta that can see through the crooked designs of the enemy" (S.90). We are told again, "It is in accordance with the law of Ṛta that the sun withdraws his fiery rays, spreads them out regularly and proclaims his royal prestige to the world. The vast army of the heartless enemies is done to death. So let us not be kept away from companionship with Ṛta and gods. Let us attain liberation" (S.91). It is in the spiritual efforts that the good offices of Ṛta prove to be a great helping hand. "The path of the gods (Devayāna) which is another name for Ṛta becomes a guide to him who wishes to rise above the world of pleasures and craves for the world of light. When he performs holy actions, the path of gods reveals itself to him in a flood of light" (S.92).

(b) Rule of God. The majesty of laws prescribed by God is maintained a number of times. "No man, even if he had the strength of a hundred human beings, can out-live the statutes of God" (S.93). "The Brāhmaṇas obtained the Brahma psalm for the sake of Indra. No wise person transgresses the rules of Indra, nor do any of the deities" (S.94). Though the rule of God is absolutely powerful, it is not stern. This subordination of sterner to gentler virtues is a noteworthy point of Vedic wisdom. Later-day ethical philosophy took this as a criterion of moral progress. God is a monarch no doubt, but he is a merciful patriarch. "Oh powerful God, your sovereignty is unlimited. Like light you rule over all quarters. But your discipline does not hurt, just as a soft cord round the neck of a calf does not hurt it" (S.95).

(c) Rule of Self. Hard or soft, an external rule is after all external. There must be discipline, no doubt, but it should be self-imposed and not other-imposed. The best expression of a moral law, therefore, is the rule of the self. "Oh Varuṇa, loosen all the nooses for us, may they be hard, soft or of a medium quality. We shall not transgress your discipline and shall enjoy freedom" (S.96). However lenient the rules may be, they are taken as restrictions when prescribed by others. The sage does not want to throw away the rule of law, but wants to make God's law his own, so that in the very act of observing the law, he is free. This is a very exalted status which a devotee can reach; for, here God's law has become his own law; heteronomy has turned into autonomy. Autonomy is meaningful only when the self has become God-like. There is another Mantra which expresses this fact even more emphatically. "A man may think about wealth and strive to acquire it by adhering to the course of eternal moral law and by humble devotion to God. In this respect he should consult his own conscience and in mind stick firmly to his best judgment", says Ṛṣi Kavaṣa Ailūṣa (S.97). Four points may be considered here. (i) Eudaemonism is writ large on the face of this verse. There is no unnecessary shunning from worldly benefits. This testifies to the healthy-mindedness of the Vedic seers. They wanted the good of both the worlds and they saw no contradiction in it. (ii) However, they put forth a condition to be fulfilled. The wealth is to be acquired in a just manner, (Ṛtasya pathā). The doctrine of purity of means is seen here. There is no insistence on asceticism, we can acquire and enjoy wealth; but only the moral method of acquiring it, entitles us to its enjoyment. (iii) Now arises the question as to who can determine the morality of means. Whom are we to consult for ensuring the moral quality of the means? The answer of the Vedic seer is crisp. He says: Consult your own conscience (Svena kratunā samvadeta). You are yourself the guide. Morality of an action is to be determined by no out-side agent. This is autonomy pure and simple. No outside law, not even God's law imposes any restriction on us. We should conscientiously think and outline our plan of action. (iv) The sage of this Mantra possesses so sound a judgment that one can not be too smart for him. Apparently the freedom given to ourselves to determine the morality

of an action seems dangerous. I can acquire wealth by deceitful means and declare that my conscience had sanctioned those ways as just. And when I am given freedom to choose my own instrument by consulting my own conscience, no one can question the propriety thereof. Again, man for whom the line of pleasure is more easy and more attractive, is likely to choose a wrong course and still go scot-free because he is his own law. The ancient moralist knew this psychology and also knew the ethical side of the question of determining the morality of an action. He now says: It is alright that you yourself decide the means; but take care that this 'you' is 'Philip the sober' and not 'Philip the drunk'. Passions lead you away from your spiritual good. Hence *that* mind and *that* mind *alone* should be your guide which always points to your ultimate end (Śreyāmsam dakṣam manasā jagṛbhyāt). This aspect of mind is not earthly; it is the divinity in man. Thus our moral guide is neither man, nor God, but God in man. You have to see Him within as Kant saw the supreme moral law within himself. The divine aspect of man was termed by Kant as the Kingdom of Ends. He stated that man is a law maker so far as he is a member of the Kingdom of Ends, and is a subject as a member of ordinary human kingdom. Thus the Kantian concepts of the Kingdom of Ends and autonomy of moral law, are found pre-fabricated in the Mantra under consideration. The concepts were fully developed, neatly worded and carefully preserved for posterity in the time capsule of Vedic tradition.

Now a question of some theoretical interest crops up. Does moral preparation have a pulling force so that god has no alternative but to bless the devotee? And if so, does it not seriously limit God's freedom? Well, Leibnitz was faced with the same problem. For him the present world is the best possible world. At the same time God is free. Now if we say that the quality of the world compelled God to choose it, God's freedom is nullified. And if we say that God chose this world without any regard to its good quality, it harms the Law of Sufficient Reason, for nothing can take place unless there is a sufficient reason for it. To preserve both the sanctity of the Law of Sufficient Reason and God's freedom, Leibnitz said that God could have chosen any world from the innumerable possible worlds; but the present world, being the best one, only provided a Sufficient

Reason for being chosen and did not compel him to choose it. It just provided the ground. We do not know whether such a solution is really a solution. But it must be stated that we have to employ some such 'solution' to solve the problem of moral worth and God's grace. God may shower grace when and where *He* chooses; we can not compel Him to do so. But our moral development completes the preliminaries, so that in case He chooses to come, we are prepared for His visit. If not a compelling force, our fitness should serve as an attractive force. It should give us strength to watch and pray for grace. And this grace-worthiness is what 'the wisdom of God discerns, His goodness chooses and His power effects.'

SOURCES-II

1. अपेहि मनसस्पते ऽपक्राम परश्चर।
परो निर्ऋत्या आ चक्ष्व बहुधा जीवतो मनः।। ऋग्वेद X.164.1

2. शिवास्त एका अशिवास्त एकाः सर्वा बिभर्षि सुमनस्यमानः।
तिस्रो वाचो निहिता अंतरस्मिन् तासामेका वि पपातानु घोषम्।। अथर्ववेद VII.43.1

3. वि मे कर्णा पतयतो वि चक्षुर्वीदं ज्योतिर्हृदय आहितं यत्।
वि मे मनश्चरति दूरआधीः किं स्विद् वक्ष्यामि किमु नू मनिष्ये।। ऋग्वेद VI.9.6

4. स्वयं कविर्विधर्तरि विप्राय रत्नमिच्छति। यदी मर्मृज्यते धियः।। ऋग्वेद IX.47.4

5. अपामीवामप स्निधमप सेधत दुर्मतिम्।
आदित्यासो युयोतना नो अंहसः।।
युयोता शरुमस्मदान् आदित्यास उतामतिम्।
ऋधग्द्वेषः कृणुत विश्ववेदसः।।
तत् सु नः शर्म यच्छतादित्या यन्मुमोचति।
एन स्वंतं चिदेनसः सुदानवः।। ऋग्वेद VIII.18.10, 11, 12

6. बृहस्पतिर्नयतु दुर्गहा तिरः पुनर्नेषदघशंसाय मन्म।
क्षिपदशस्तिमप दुर्मतिं हन्नथा करद्यजमानाय शं योः।। ऋग्वेद X.182.1

7. इन्द्रवायू बृहस्पतिं सुहवेह हवामहे।
यथा नः सर्व इज्जनः संगत्यां सुमना असत्।। ऋग्वेद X.141.4

8. यज्ञस्य चक्षुः प्रभृतिः मुखं च वाचा श्रोत्रेण मनसा जुहोमि।
इमं यज्ञं विततं विश्वकर्मणा देवा यंतु सुमनस्यमानाः।। अथर्ववेद II.35.5

9. भद्रं नो अपि वातय मनः दक्षं उत क्रतुम्।
अधा ते सख्ये अंधसो वि वो मदे रणन् गावो न यवसे विवक्षसे।। ऋग्वेद X.25.1

10. यत् जाग्रतो दूर मुदैति दैवं तत् उ सुप्तस्य तथैव एति।
दूरं गमं ज्योतिषां ज्योतिरेकं तन्मे मनः शिवसंकल्पमस्तु।।

येन कर्माण्यपसो मनीषिणो यज्ञे कृण्वंति विदथेषु धीराः।
यत् अपूर्वं यक्षं अंतः प्रजानां तन्मे मनः शिवसंकल्पमस्तु।।

यत् प्रज्ञानं उत चेतो धृतिश्च यत् ज्योतिः अंतरमृतं प्रजासु।
यस्मान्न ऋते किं चन कर्म क्रियते तन्मे मनः शिवसंकल्पमस्तु।।

येन इदं भूतं भुवनं भविष्यत् परिगृहीतं अमृतेन सर्वम्।
येन यज्ञस्तायते सप्तहोता तन्मे मनः शिवसंकल्पमस्तु।।

यस्मिन् ऋचः साम यजूंषि यस्मिन् प्रतिष्ठिता रथनाभौ इव आराः।
यस्मिन् चित्तं सर्वमोतं प्रजानां तन्मे मनः शिवसंकल्पमस्तु।।

सुषारथिः अश्वान् इव यत् मनुष्यान् नेनीयते अभीशुभिः वाजिन इव।
हृत्प्रतिष्ठं यत् अजिरं जविष्ठं तन्मे मनः शिवसंकल्पमस्तु।। यजुर्वेद XXXIV.1-6

11. तन्वं स्वर्गो बहुधा वि चक्रे यथा विद आत्मन्नन्यवर्णाम्।
अपाजैत् कृष्णां रुशतीं पुनानो या लोहिनी तां ते अग्नौ जुहोमि।। अथर्ववेद XII.3.54

12. न मा तमन्न श्रमन्नोत तंद्रन्न वोचाम मा सुनोतेति सोमम्।
यो मे पृणात् यो ददत् यो निबोधात् यो मा सुन्वंतमुप गोभिरायत्।।
ऋग्वेद II.30.7

13. अध स्वप्नस्य निर्विदे अभुंजतश्च रेवतः। उभा ता बस्त्रि नश्यतः।। ऋग्वेद I.120.12

14. इच्छंति देवाः सुन्वंतम् न स्वप्नाय स्पृहयंति यंति प्रमादं अतंद्राः।। अथर्ववेद XX.18.3

15. य इन्द्र सस्त्यव्रतो ऽनुष्वापमदेवयुः।
स्वैः ष एवैर्मुमुरत् पोष्यं रयिं सनुतर्धेहि तं ततः।। ऋग्वेद VIII.97.3

16. न स स्वो दक्षो वरुण ध्रुतिः सा सुरा मन्युर्विभीदको अचित्तिः।
अस्ति ज्यायान् कनीयस उपारे स्वप्नश्चनेदनृतस्य प्रयोता।। ऋग्वेद VII.86.6

17. यो देवो विश्वाद् यमु काममाहुः यं दातारं प्रतिगृण्हं तमाहुः।
यो धीरः शक्रः परिभू अदाभ्यः तेभ्यो अग्निभ्यो हुतमस्तु एतत्।।
हिरण्यपाणिं सवितारमिंद्रं बृहस्पतिं वरुणं मित्रमग्निम्।
विश्वान् देवान् अंगिरसो हवामह इमं ऋव्यादं शमयंतु अग्निम्।।
अथर्ववेद III.21.4, 8

18. मो षु णः परापरा निर्ऋतिर्दुर्हणा वधीत्। पदीष्ट तृष्णया सह।। ऋग्वेद I.38.6

19. उदस्य श्यावौ विथुरौ गृध्रौ द्यामिव पेततुः।
उत् शोचनप्रशोचनौ अस्य उत् शोचनौ हृदः।।
अहं एनौ उदतिष्ठिपं गावौ श्रांतसदौ इव।
कुर्कुरौ इव कूजंतौ उदवंतौ वृकौ इव।। अथर्ववेद VII.95.1, 2

20. योऽ स्मांश्चक्षुषा मनसा चित्त्याकूत्या च यो अघायुरभिदासात्।
त्वं तानग्ने मेन्यामेनीन् कृणु स्वाहा।। अथर्ववेद V.6.10

21. विश्वा हि मर्त्यत्वना ऽनुकामा शतक्रतो। अगन्म वज्रिन्नाशसः।। ऋग्वेद VIII.92.13

22. इमं नु सोममंतितो हृत्सु पीतमुप ब्रुवे।
यत् सीमागश्चकृमा तत् सु मृळतु पुलुकामो हि मर्त्यः।। ऋग्वेद I.179.5

23. अगस्त्यः खनमानः खनित्रैः प्रजामपत्यं बलमिच्छमानः।
उभौ वर्णावृषिरुग्रः पुपोष सत्या देवेषु आशिषो जगाम।। ऋग्वेद I.179.6

24. इंद्र जहि पुमांसं यातुधानमुत स्त्रियं माययां शाशदानाम्।
विग्रीवासो मूरदेवा ऋदंतु मा ते दृशन् त्सूर्यमुच्चरंतम्।। ऋग्वेद VII.104.24

25. न यातव इंद्र जूजुवुर्नो न वंदना शविष्ठ वेद्याभिः।
स शर्धत् अर्यो विषुणस्य जंतोः मा शिश्नदेवा अपि गुर्ऋतं नः।। ऋग्वेद VII.21.5

26. अतीहि मन्युषाविणं सुषुवांसमुपारणे। इमं रातं सुतं पिब।। ऋग्वेद VIII.32.21

27. स इत् भोजो यो गृहवे ददात्यन्नकामाय चरते कृशाय।
अरमस्मै भवति यामहूता उतापरीषु कृणुते सखायम्।।

पृणीयादिन्नाधमानाय तव्यान् द्राघीयांसमनु पश्येत पंथाम्।
ओ हि वर्तते रथ्येव चक्रा ऽन्यमन्यमुप तिष्ठंत रायः।।

मोघमन्नं विंदते अप्रचेताः सत्यं ब्रवीमि वध इन् स तस्य।
नार्यमणं पुष्यति नो सखायं केवलाघो भवति केवलादी।। ऋग्वेद X.117.3,5,6

28. इमं मे अग्ने पुरुषं मुमुग्ध्ययं यो बद्धः सुयतो लालपीति।
अतोऽधि ते कृणवद्भागधेयं यदानुन्मदितोऽसति।। अथर्ववेद VI.111.1

29. यो अस्मै घ्रंस उत वा य ऊधनि सोमं सुनोति भवति द्युमाँ अह।
अपाप शक्रस्ततनुष्टिमूहतितनूशुभ्रं मघवा यः कवासखः।। ऋग्वेद V.34.3

30. एतो नु इंद्रं स्तवामेशानं वस्वः स्वराजम्। न राधसा मर्धिषन्नः।। ऋग्वेद VIII.81.4

31. ईर्ष्याया ध्रार्जिं प्रथमां प्रथमस्या उत अपराम्।
अग्निं हृदय्यं शोकं तं ते निर्वापयामसि।।

यथा भूमिः मृतमनाः मृतात् मृतमनस्तरा।
यथोत ममुषो मनः एव ईर्ष्योः मृतं मनः।।

अदो यत् ते हृदिश्रितं मनस्कं पतयिष्णुकम्।
ततस्ते ईर्ष्या मुंचामि निर् ऊष्माणं दृतेरिव।। अथर्ववेद VI.18.1, 2, 3

32. त्वं सोम तनूकृद्भ्यो द्वेषोभ्योऽन्यकृतेभ्यः। उरु यन्तासि वरूथम्।। ऋग्वेद VIII.79.3

33. उलूकयातुं शुशुलूकयातुं जहि श्वयातुमुत कोकयातुम्।
सुपर्णयातुमुत गृध्रयातुं दृषदेव प्र मृण रक्ष इंद्र।। ऋग्वेद VII.104.22

34. न दुष्टुती मर्त्यो विंदते वसु न स्रेधंतं रयिः नशत्।
सुशक्तिः इत् मघवन् तुभ्यं मावते देष्णं यत् पार्ये दिवि।। ऋग्वेद VII.32.21

35. पाकत्रा स्थन देवा हृत्सु जानीथ मर्त्यम्। उप द्वयुं चाद्वयुं च वसवः।।
ऋग्वेद VIII.18.15

36. नीचा वर्तन्त उपरि स्फुरन्त्यहस्तासो हस्तवन्तं सहन्ते।
दिव्या अङ्गारा इरिणे न्युप्ताः शीताः सन्तो हृदयं निर्दहन्ति।। ऋग्वेद X.34.9

37. यदादीध्ये न दविषाण्येभिः परायद्भ्योऽव हीये सखिभ्यः।
न्युप्ताश्च बभ्रवो वाचमक्रतँ एमीदेषां निष्कृतं जारिणीव।। ऋग्वेद X.34.5

38. अक्षैर्मा दीव्यः कृषिमित् कृषस्व वित्ते रमस्व बहु मन्यमानः।
तत्र गावः कितव तत्र जाया तन्मे वि चष्टे सवितायमर्यः।। ऋग्वेद X.34.13

39. सप्त मर्यादाः कवयस्ततक्षुः तासामेकामिदभ्यं हुरो गात्।
आयोर्ह स्कंभ उपमस्यनीळे पथां विसर्गे धरुणेषु तस्थौ।। ऋग्वेद X.5.6

40. मा नः स्तेनेभ्यो ये अभि द्रुहस्पदे निरामिणो रिपवोऽन्नेषु जागृधुः।
आ देवानामोहते वि व्रयो हृदि बृहस्पते न परः साम्नो विदुः।। ऋग्वेद II.23.16

41. उत वा यो नो मर्चयादनागसो अरातीवा मर्तः सानुको वृकः।
बृहस्पते अप तं वर्तया पथः सुगं नो अस्यै देववीतये कृधि।।

त्रातारं त्वा तनूनां हवामहे अवस्पर्तरधिवक्तारमस्मयुम्।
बृहस्पते देवनिदो नि बर्हय मा दुरेवा उत्तरं सुम्न मुन्नशन्।। ऋग्वेद II.23.7, 8

42. न्यक्रतून् ग्रथिनो मृध्रवाचः पणींरश्रद्धाँ अवृधाँ अयज्ञान्।
प्र प्र तान् दस्यूँरग्निर्विवाय पूर्वश्चकारापराँ अयज्यून्।। ऋग्वेद VII.6.3

43. अभ्रातरो न योषणो व्यंतः पतिरिपो न जनयो दुरेवाः।
पापासः संतो अनृता असत्या इदं पदमजनता गभीरम्।। ऋग्वेद IV.5.5

44. एतच्चन त्वो वि चिकेतदेषां सत्यो मंत्रः कविशस्त ऋधावान्।
त्रिरश्रिं हंति चतुरश्रिः उग्रो देवनिदो ह प्रथमा अजूर्यन्।। ऋग्वेद I.152.2

45. त्वं विष्णो सुमतिं विश्वजन्यामप्रयुतामेवयावो मतिं दाः।
पर्चो यथा नः सुवितस्य भूरेरश्वावतः पुरुश्चंद्रस्य रायः।। ऋग्वेद VII.100.2

46. भग प्रणेतर्भग सत्यराधो भगेमां धियमुदवा ददन्नः।
भग प्र णो जनय गोभिरश्वैर्भग प्र नृभिर्नृवन्तः स्याम।। अथर्ववेद III.16.3

47. विश्वो देवस्य नेतुर्मर्तो वुरीत सख्यम्।
विश्वो राय इषुध्यति द्युम्नं वृणीत पुष्यसे।। ऋग्वेद V.50.1

48. पथस्पथः परिपतिं वचस्या कामेन कृतो अभ्यानळर्कम्।
स नो रासच्छुरूधश्चन्द्राग्रा धियंधियं सीषधाति प्र पूषा।। ऋग्वेद VI.49.8

49. भद्रं नो अपि वातय मनः।।
एवा ते अग्ने विमदो मनीषामूर्जो नपादमृतेभिः सजोषाः।
गिर आ वक्षत् सुमतीरियान इषमूर्जं सुक्षितिं विश्वमाभाः।। ऋग्वेद X.20.1, 10

50. सत्येनोत्तभिता भूमिः सूर्येणोत्तभिता द्यौः।
ऋतेन आदित्याः तिष्ठंति दिवि सोमो अधि श्रितः।। ऋग्वेद X.85.1

51. सत्यं बृहत् ऋतं उग्रं दीक्षा तपो ब्रह्म यज्ञः पृथिवीं धारयंति।
सा नो भूतस्य भव्यस्य पत्नी उरुं लोकं पृथिवी नः कृणोतु।। अथर्ववेद XII.1.1

52. सुविज्ञानं चिकितुषे जनाय सच्चासच्च वचसी पस्पृधाते।
तयोर्यत् सत्यं यतरदृजीयस्तदित् सोमोऽवति हंत्यासत्।। ऋग्वेद VII.104.12

53. मा नो हिंसीत् जनिता यः पृथिव्या यो वा दिवं सत्यधर्मा जजान।
यश्चापश्चंद्रा बृहतीः जजान, कस्मै देवाय हविषा विधेम।। ऋग्वेद X.121.9

54. इयं वा इदं न तृतीयमस्ति। सत्यंचैव अनृतंच, सत्यमेव देवाः अनृतं मनुष्याः
"इदमहमनृतात् सत्यमुपैमि" इति तन्मनुष्येभ्यो देवानुपैति।।
स वै सत्यमेव वदेत्। एतद् ह व देवा व्रतं चरंति यत् सत्यं तस्मात् ते यशः।
यशो ह भवति य एव विद्वान् सत्यं वदति।। शतपथ ब्राह्मण I.1.1.4

55. दृष्ट्वा रूपे व्याकरोत्सत्यानृते प्रजापतिः। अश्रद्धामनृतेऽदधाच्छ्रद्धां सत्ये प्रजापतिः।
ऋतेन सत्यमिन्द्रियं विपानं शुक्रमन्धस इन्द्रस्येन्द्रियमिदं पयोऽमृतं मधु।।
यजुर्वेद XIX.77

56. पवित्रं ते विततं ब्रह्मणस्पते प्रभुर्गात्राणि पर्येषि विश्वतः।
अतप्ततनूर्न तदामो अश्नुते शृतास इत् वहंतस्तत् समाशत।।

तपोष्पवित्रं विततं दिवस्पदे शोचंतो अस्य तंतवो व्यस्थिरन्।
अवंत्यस्य पवीतारमाशवो दिवस्पृष्ठं अधि तिष्ठंति चेतसा।।

गंधर्व इत्था पदमस्य रक्षति पाति देवानां जनिमान्यद्भुतः।
गृभ्णाति रिपुं निधया निधापतिः सुकृत्तमा मधुनो भक्षमाशत।। ऋग्वेद IX.83.1, 2, 4

57. ता सम्राजा घृतासुती आदित्या दानुनस्पती।
सचेते अनवह्वरम्।। ऋग्वेद II.41.6

58. आपो अस्मान् मातरः शुन्धयन्तु घृतेन नो घृतप्वः पुनन्तु।
विश्वं हि रिप्रं प्रवहन्ति देवीरुदिदाभ्यः शुचिरा पूत एमि।। ऋग्वेद X.17.10

59. पवस्व वृत्रहन्तमोक्थेभिरनुमाद्यः। शुचिः पावको अद्भुतः।। ऋग्वेद IX.24.6

60. यदंति यच्च दूरके भयं विंदति मामिह। पवमान वि तज्जहि।।
पवमानः सो अद्य नः पवित्रेण विचर्षणिः। यः पोता स पुनातु नः।।
यत्ते पवित्रमर्चिषि अग्ने विततं अंतरा। ब्रह्म तेन पुनीहि नः।।
यत्ते पवित्रमर्चिवदग्ने तेन पुनीहि नः। ब्रह्मसवैः पुनीहि नः।।
उभाभ्यां देव सवितः पवित्रेण सवेन च। मां पुनीहि विश्वतः।।
त्रिभिष्ट्वं देव सवितर्वर्षिष्ठैः सोमधामभिः। अग्ने दक्षैः पुनीहि नः।।
पुनंतु मां देवजनाः पुनंतु वसवो धियः।
विश्वे देवाः पुनीत मा जातवेदः पुनीहि मा।। ऋग्वेद IX.67.21-27

61. पवित्रेण पुनीहि मा शुक्रेण देव दीद्यत्। अग्ने क्रत्वा क्रतून् रनु।। यजुर्वेद XIX.40

62. उभाभ्यां देव सवितर् पवित्रेण सवेन च। अस्मान् पुनीहि चक्षसे।। अथर्ववेद VI.19.3

63. पवमानः पुनातु मा क्रत्वे दक्षाय जीवसे। अथो अरिष्ट तातये।। अथर्ववेद VI.19.2

64. अग्ने तपस्तप्यामह उप तप्यामहे तपः।
श्रुतानि शृण्वंतो वयं आयुष्मंतः सुमेधसः।। अथर्ववेद VII.61.2

65. देवान् यत् नाथितो हुवे ब्रह्मचर्यं यत् ऊषिम।
अक्षान् यत् बभ्रून् आलभे ते नो मृडंतु ईदृशे।। अथर्ववेद VII.109.7

66. ब्रह्मचर्येण तपसा देवा मृत्युमपाघ्नत।
इंद्रो ह ब्रह्मचर्येण देवेभ्यः स्वराभरत्।। अथर्ववेद XI.5.19

67. ग्रन्थिं न वि ष्य ग्रथितं पुनान ऋजुं च गातुं वृजिनं च सोम।
अत्यो न क्रदो हरिरा सृजानो मर्यो देव धन्व पस्त्यावान्।। ऋग्वेद IX.97.18

68. इमे मा पीता यशसः उरुष्यवो रथं न गावः सं अनाह पर्वसु।
ते मा रक्षंतु विस्रसः चरित्रात् उत मा स्रामात् यवयंतु इंदवः।।

अग्नि न मा मथितं सं दिदीपः प्रचक्षय कृणुहि वयस्थो नः।
अथाहि ते मद आ सोम मन्ये रेवान् इव प्रचरा पुष्टिं अच्छ।।
ऋग्वेद VIII.48.5, 6

69. सुनीतिभिर्नयसि त्रायसे जनं यस्तुभ्यं दाशान्न तमंहो अश्नवत्।
ब्रह्मद्विषस्तपनो मन्युमीरसि बृहस्पते महि तत् ते महित्वनम्।। ऋग्वेद II.23.4

70. आ नो अग्ने वयोवृधं रयिं पावक शंस्यम्।
रास्वा च न उपमाते पुरुस्पृहं सुनीती स्वयशस्तरम्।। ऋग्वेद VIII.60.11

71. इंद्रस्य सख्यमृभवः समानशुर्मनोर्नपातो अपसो दधन्विरे।
सौधन्वनासो अमृतत्वमेरिरे विष्ट्वीशमीभिः सुकृतः सुकृत्यया।। ऋग्वेद III.60.3

72. ये बध्यमानमनुदीध्याना अन्वैक्षंत मनसा चक्षुषा च।
अग्निष्टानग्रे प्र मुमोक्तु देवो विश्वकर्मा प्रजया संरराणः।। अथर्ववेद II.34.3

73. जिह्वाया अग्रे मधु मे जिह्वामूले मधूलकम्।
ममेदह क्रतौ असः मम चित्तमुपायसि।।

मधुमत् मे निक्रमणं मधुमत् मे परायणम्।
वाचा वदामि मधुमत् भूयासं मधुसंदृशः।। अथर्ववेद I.34.2, 3

74. मधुमत् मे परायणं मधुमत् पुनरायनम्।
ता नो देवा देवतया युवं मधुमतस्कृतम्।। ऋग्वेद X.24.6

75. रथे तिष्ठन् नयति वाजिनः पुरो यत्रयत्र कामयते सुषारथिः।
अभीशूनां महिमानं पनायत मनः पश्चादनु यच्छन्ति रश्मयः।। ऋग्वेद VI.75.6

76. नाकस्य पृष्ठे अधि तिष्ठति श्रितो यः पृणाति स ह देवेषु गच्छति।
तस्मा आपो घृतमर्षति सिंधवस्तस्मै इयं दक्षिणा पिन्वते सदा।।

दक्षिणावतामित् इमानि चित्रा दक्षिणावतां दिवि सूर्यासः।
दक्षिणावंतो अमृतं भजंते दक्षिणावंतः प्र तिरंत आयुः।।

मा पृणंतो दुरितमेन आरन् मा जारिषुः सूरयः सुव्रतासः।
अन्यस्तेषां परिधिरस्तु कश्चिदपृणन्तमभि सं यन्तु शोकाः।। ऋग्वेद I.125.5, 6, 7

77. न भोजा मम्रुर्न न्यर्थमीयुर्न रिष्यन्ति न व्यथन्ते ह भोजाः।
इदं यद्विश्वं भुवनं स्वश्चै तत् सर्वं दक्षिणैभ्यो ददाति।। ऋग्वेद X.107.8

78. शं पदं मघं रयीषिणो न काममव्रतो हिनोति न स्पृशद्रयिम्। सामवेद 441

79. अग्निहोत्रं च श्रद्धा च वषट्कारो व्रतं तपः।
दक्षिणेष्टं पूर्तं चोच्छिष्टेऽधि समाहिताः।।

सूनृता संनतिः क्षेमः स्वधोर्जामृतं सहः।
उच्छिष्टे सर्वे प्रत्यंचः कामा कामेन तातृपुः।। अथर्ववेद XI.7.9, 13

80. आ पवस्व दिशां पत आर्जीकात् सोम मीढ्वः।
ऋतवाकेन सत्येन श्रद्धया तपसा सुत इंद्राय इंदो परिस्रव।। ऋग्वेद IX.113.2

81. अपि पंथामगन्महि स्वस्तिगामनेहसम्।
येन विश्वाः परिद्विषो वृणक्ति विंदते वसु।। ऋग्वेद VI.51.16

82. प्रत्नात् मानाद् अध्या ये समस्वरन् श्लोकयंत्रासः रभसस्य मंतवः।
अपानक्षासो बधिरा अहासत ऋतस्य पंथां न तरंति दुष्कृतः।। ऋग्वेद IX.73.6

83. श्रद्धयाग्निः समिध्यते श्रद्धया हूयते हविः।
श्रद्धां भगस्य मूर्धनि वचसा वेदयामसि।।
श्रद्धां देवा यजमाना वायुगोपा उपासते।
श्रद्धां हृदय्ययाकूत्या श्रद्धया विंदते वसु।।
श्रद्धां प्रातर्हवामहे श्रद्धां मध्यं दिनं परि।
श्रद्धां सूर्यस्य निम्रुचि श्रद्धे श्रद्धापयेह नः।। ऋग्वेद X.151.1, 4, 5

84. ऋजुरित् शंसो वनवद् वनुष्यतो देवयन्निददेवयंतमभ्यसत्।
सुप्रावीरिद् वनवत् पृत्सु दृष्टरं यज्वेदयज्योर्वि भजाति भोजनम्।। ऋग्वेद II.26.1

85. व्रतेन दीक्षां आप्नोति, दीक्षयाप्नोति दक्षिणाम्।
दक्षिणा श्रद्धां आप्नोति श्रद्धया सत्यमाप्यते।। यजुर्वेद XIX.30

86. त्वां वर्धंति क्षितयः पृथिव्यां त्वां राय उभयासो जनानाम्।
त्वं त्राता तरणे चेत्यो भूः पिता माता सदमिन्मानुषाणाम्।। ऋग्वेद VI.1.5

87. अविर्वै नाम देवतर्तेनास्ते परीवृता।
तस्या रूपेण इमे वृक्षा हरिता हरितस्रजः।। अथर्ववेद X.8.31

88. यथा नो मित्रो अर्यमा वरुणः संति गोपाः। सुगा ऋतस्य पंथाः।। ऋग्वेद VIII.31.13

89. युवं वस्त्राणि पीवसा वसाथे युवोः अच्छिद्रा मंतवो ह सर्गाः।
अवातिरतम् अनृतानि विश्व ऋतेन मित्रावरुणा सचेथे।। ऋग्वेद I.152.1

90. ऋतावानः प्रतिचक्ष्यानृता पुनरात आ तस्थुः कवयो महस्पथः।
ते बाहुभ्यां धमितमग्निमश्मनि नकिः षो अस्त्यरणो जहुर्हि तम्।। ऋग्वेद II.24.7

91. ऋतेन देवः सविता शमायत ऋतस्य शृङ्गमुर्विया वि पप्रथे।
ऋतं सासाह महि चित् पृतन्यतो मा नो वि यौष्टं सख्या मुमोचतम्।। ऋग्वेद VIII.86.5

92. ईजानश्चितमारुक्षदग्निं नाकस्य पृष्ठाद्दिवमुत्पतिष्यन्।
तस्मै प्र भातिनभसो ज्योतिषीमानूत्स्वर्गः पंथाः सृकृते देवयानः।। अथर्ववेद XVIII.4.14

93. न देवानामति व्रतं शतात्मा चन जीवति। तथा युजा वि वावृते।। ऋग्वेद X.33.9

94. उरुव्यचसे महिने सुवृक्तिमिन्द्राय ब्रह्म जनयन्त विप्राः।
तस्य व्रतानि न मिनन्ति धीराः।। ऋग्वेद VII.31.11

95. शचीवतस्ते पुरुशाक शाका गवा मिव सुतयः संचरणीः।
वत्सानां न तन्तयस्त इन्द्र दामन्वन्तो अदामानः सुदामन्।। ऋग्वेद VI.24.4

96. उदुत्तमं वरुण पाशमस्मदवाधमं वि मध्यमं श्रथाय।
अधा वयमादित्य व्रते तवानागसो अदितये स्याम।। अथर्ववेद VII.83.3

97. परि चिन्मर्तो द्रविणं ममन्यात् ऋतस्य पथा नमसा विवासेत्।
उत स्वेन क्रतुना सं वदेत श्रेयांसं दक्षं मनसा जगृभ्यात्।। ऋग्वेद X.31.2

CHAPTER III

The Problem of God

The inarticulate cry of the new born baby sounds like the articulate words कोऽहम् (who am I) and Rāmadāsa, the great Maharashtra saint, comments that the baby, as soon as it enters into the world, asks the question, who am I? Rāmadāsa further says that while in the womb the baby was saying 'Soham Soham' (I am He, I am He), but the identity is lost as soon as the contact with the external world begins (Dāsabodha III.1.47). Consequently man is troubled by questions like 'Is the world real?', 'Who am I?' or 'What is the ultimate Reality?' It is these questions which are the fundamental problems of metaphysics.

We shall begin by noting three approaches to Reality — the psychological, the cosmological and the theological, the last being our main concern. We shall then turn to the proofs of the existence of God. Coming to the epistemology of God-consciousness, we shall discuss the view that it is impossible to know God with the help of reason. Then follows the survey of metaphysical characteristics of God where we shall see how roots of later day characterisation of God as Sat, Cit and Ānanda are present here. Spatial and numerical properties have no place in the consideration of God. In our stride we shall notice tendencies like immanence, immano-transcendence, polytheism, monotheism and monism.

1. Three Approaches to Reality. For our purpose, the enquiries regarding the self and the world are subservient to the enquiry into the problem of God. Therefore, the first two enquiries can be treated as preliminaries to the central theme, viz. God.

(a) The Psychological Approach. The Vedic Ṛṣis were conscious that an inner vital principle is the motive force of all actions of man. This, we may call, the psychological approach to the problem of reality. The Ṛṣi prays that this motive force be pure

and auspicious. However, the enigma surrounding this principle still persists as it is referred to as a mysterious being (Yakṣa). "May that inner mysterious being, by which the wise, well-versed in the science of sacrifice execute all their tasks, resolve on what is auspicious," says the poem (S.1). It was realised that the *elan vital* is distinct from the body; yet it resides in the body and functions in consonance with it. "That principle which is living and moving and which breathes, is interred in the body. The body, though inert (Mṛta), moves the living principle and both of them stay together" (S.2). It sounds contradictory to read that the inert moves the living. Contrasted with the living, throbbing vital principle (Jīva), the body is referred to as inert. Now it is well known that the Jīva moves the body and not vice versa. But in the first place the Jīva is not visible from outside and its function of moving remains hidden. Secondly, it can not disregard the laws of the inert body that is to be moved. As such the body seems to move according to its own laws and appears to be the moving force of the inner spiritual principle which is the real mover.

(b) The Cosmological Approach. Parallel to the enquiry into the mainspring of action in the microcosm, is the enquiry into the similar source of impulse in the macrocosm. This is the cosmological approach to the problem of reality. "Tell me what the support of the universe is. In it austerities reach their consummation; in it are balanced the moral law and faith, the waters and Brahman" (S.3). Obviously that which balances and stabilises the physical entities like water, the psychological forces like faith, the moral principle namely Ṛta and the vast cosmic reality or Brahman is the fundamental reality. "Nothing can outdo the great Indra in whom are concentrated all powers. He sustains Soma in his stomach, prowess in his body, thunder-bolt in his hand and divine knowledge in his head" (S.4). "Who is the support of the universe to whom gods offer worship with their hands and feet, word, ear and eyes?" (S.5). The thirst to know the ultimate reality is unquenchable. "Who has been a witness to the *modus operandi* in which the boneless soul, the first born and life urge of the earth, came to inhabit this bony tenement? Who is he who, not finding answers himself, has approached a wise man to receive

instruction?", asks Ṛṣi Dīrghatamas Aucathya (S.6). The verse epitomises the fundamental problem of all philosophy, namely, to know how the one Reality finds expression in the multiplicity of the world. The answer suggested is that this can be known only with the help of a spiritual teacher.

(c) The Theological Approach. The psychological and the cosmological approaches gradually lead to the theological approach. Anaximander, the ancient Greek philosopher, had already ascribed to the highest cosmic principle all the qualities that are necessary to the world-ground. The Infinite, he said, was imperishable and inexhaustible. Windelband points out that still another dimension to this concept was added by Anaximander when he called this Infinite or Apeiron *To Theion* or the God. Anaximander's conception was deemed to be the first philosophic conception of God. But it must be pointed out that much earlier than Anaximander, the Vedic seer had identified this infinite power with God and had exhibited a remarkable maturity of thought. In the eighteenth century Kant stressed the tendency of the human mind to consider that highest Being as God. He said further that in order to justify this tendency, reason devises arguments for the existence of God.

2. Arguments for the Existence of God. In Western thought the arguments for the existence of God, given by Anselm and Descartes, occupy a significant position, though not as significant as the devastating criticism which Kant levelled against them. They are roughly summarised into three ways of arriving at God's existence. The physico-theological proof argues from the order or design in the world to the author of that order. The cosmological or causal argument starts from the fact of the world and then takes us back to its cause which is God. The third – which Kant takes as lying at the back of the first two – is the ontological argument which analyses the idea of God and concludes that existence must be included in the idea of such a perfect being. Kant dubbed all of them as too intellectualistic and substituted his own argument which later on came to be known as the moral argument. The Vedas have spelt out at least three of the arguments; only the ontological argument can not be specifically pointed out.

(a) The Physico-theological Argument. Vedic people are fond of describing the rule of the supreme law (Ṛta) in the universe. This law works under gods, who are the guardians of the cosmic order (Gopā Ṛtasya). The order is exhibited in the regularity of natural occurrences like day and night. As commanders of the natural forces gods become sovereign rulers in the cosmic sphere. Such a description of gods comes under the purview of the physico-theological argument. "The universe in the beginning was thoroughly nurtured with divine waters by Viśvakarman. He then went on moulding infinite forms. It is known that He first bestowed divinity on the mortal man" (S.7). The words used in the hymn are Viśvakarman and Tvaṣṭā. They suggest an architect or designer and not the creator. This verse gives the physico-theological argument in its pure form. But the human mind is not satisfied by calling God a designer who is just a moulder of some material provided to him by an external agency. He must be powerful enough to create the material also. And thus the cosmological argument is ushered in.

(b) The Cosmological Argument. It is noteworthy that sometimes Time or some such agency is mentioned as a cause of the universe. "Time is the creator of heaven and earth. The past, the present and the future are supported by him. Time has created the world and things are visible only because he has created the sun. The mind and the vital breath are his creations, so too are the infinite names and forms. People revel in the idea that Time will bring them good tidings. Time gave rise to Tapas and Brahman as well as the Vedas. He is God incarnate and father even of Prajāpati. The world owes its existence and stability to the will of Time. By becoming Brahman he sustains the highest. Time created all the creatures, Prajāpati, as also sun and light" (S.8). Another poem describes how time runs the world-machine. Time is the mover but the wise who are not carried along with the stream, control it. "The horse (time) is running with its seven reins (Saptaraśmi). He is ever youthful. But the wise ride him. All things in the universe are its wheels", exclaims the sage Bhṛgu (S.9). We may observe that Time as described here, is a counterpart of flux in the philosophy of Heracleitus. Change, movement or transformation constitute reality for Heracleitus. Gauḍapāda has used a very apt expression, Kālacintakāḥ for those

who hold Time to be supreme (Māṇḍūkya Kārikā, I.8). One more view-point can be considered here. Some of the Vedic hymns are worded as if they preach naturalism; we may call this pseudo-naturalism. In this connection we may consider two sets of psalms, the import of which is of great metaphysical significance.

The first set consists of the two Mantras from the Ṛgveda. "The Law and Truth were born of arduous penance. Then was born the night and then the sea. From the sea was afterwards produced the year which controlled every thing and which regulated day and night" (S.10). If we go by the apparent meaning of these Mantras, we may conclude that out of penance was born one element after another without any one, in particular, creating the world. Such a view is naturalism which says that the world was born of itself. But Tapas, night, sea and so on from which the world is supposed to be born, should rightly be construed as only different names given to the one Reality. Vedic cosmogony (like Greek cosmogony at a later period) finds the origin of the world in some single element. But they are all meant to indicate the primal reality. In the very next stanza we read : "Dhātā in the beginning created the sun and the moon, the heaven, the earth, the space in between as well as the happy sky" (S.11). Here the shift from naturalistic creation to personalistic creation is clear. The word Tapas (austerities) in the preceding Mantra is significant. We may argue in the Cartesian fashion that austerities imply some one who practises austerities. Now, Sāyaṇa has guided us as to who this practitioner can be. He says that austerities are a plan of creation and that they were observed in order to create the world in olden times by Brahman. ब्रह्मणा पुरा सृष्ट्यर्थं कृतात् तपसः तपश्च स्रष्टव्य पर्यालोचनलक्षणम्। Further a Mantra says: "The mighty waters carried a germ which produced fire. Then was born the one breath of the gods...." (S.12). This also needs to be understood in a personalistic fashion.

The other set of poems at once confronts us with an idea of creation *ex nihilo*. "In the early age of gods, existence came from non-existence. Brahmaṇaspati worked on it like a smith. In the early age of gods, non-existence gave birth to existence. Then came the quarters and then the up-going trees. From the upward-moving trees

came out the earth, and from the earth, the quarters. From Aditi was born Dakṣa and from Dakṣa, Aditi" (S.13). The description, in addition to its naturalistic overtones, states clearly that existence came out of non-existence. This appears to be a contradiction till we understand the real import of the Ṛk. The words सत् and असत् are not used in the Vedas or in the Upaniṣads with a well-defined connotation. Sometimes *Sat* is understood as the tangible, manifest, sensible world whereas *Asat* means the entity which is intangible, unmanifest and ungraspable by the senses. At other times, *Sat* means that which exists eternally or the permanent, unchanging reality and *Asat* means the transitory or changing world of names and forms. In the Mantra in question, the first interpretation is obviously relevant and the verse implies that from the unmanifest Brahman (Asat), has all this manifest world (Sat) sprung. Sāyaṇa in his commentary says: तेषां उपादानकारणात् असतः नामरूपवर्जितत्वेन असत्। समानात् ब्रह्मणः सकाशात् सत् नामरूपविशिष्टं देवादिकं अजायत (The unmanifest which was devoid of names and forms and was, therefore, regarded as non-existence, served as the material cause; from it came out the world qualified by names and forms). Along with the idea of *ex nihilo* creation, disappears the idea of naturalism. We may only remark that these Mantras represent early stages before the idea of personalistic creation came to be mooted.

Coming to the cosmological argument proper, we find that all grandeur is traced back to God. "Man is struck with awe and wonder by seeing only two footsteps of this God living in the heavens. No one can summon up courage to behold his third step. Even those who have an access to heavens, can not know Him" (S.14). "Ucchista is the great grand father, the creator of all. He is the ruler of the greatest one on the earth" (S.15). "Great are those gods who are born of nature (*Asat*). This nature is but one aspect of Skambha whom the wise call the unmanifest (*Asat*)" (S.16). The two meanings of *Asat* referred to earlier, become clear here. Nature or Prakṛti is *Asat*; it is not ultimately real. But the wise knowers do not call it *Asat*; for them Asat *means* the supersensible, subtle essence of which nature forms but a part. There are also verses which speak of a personal God or creator. "Oh Soma, it is from your divine seed that

all the worlds are born. You rule over all the regions and control them. You are the first one who sustains creation" (S.17). This Mantra attributes to God the function of sustaining the world. This is again seen in another passage. To a query as to what the material cause of the universe is, the answer given is that God is both the creator and sustainer. "Which is that forest where grew the tree from which were created the heaven and the earth? People praise the God who created day and night. God's power is not limited to the creation of heaven and earth. They are also sustained by him. He was born even before the sun" (S.18). This is verily the view of Descartes who said that God does not only create the universe but also sustains it at every moment of its existence. Now Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa II.8.9 says that Brahman is the forest, Brahman the tree from which were formed heaven and earth. Here lies the origin of Rāmānuja's doctrine which combines the material cause (Upādāna kāraṇa) and the efficient cause (Nimitta kāraṇa) into one. This view holds that God is both these causes.[1] Apart from the different specifications of the cause like material or efficient, which are a later-day development, Brahman or the One reality, is thought to be the only creator whatever name one pleases to attribute to it. "The first cause of the universe, Brahman, is itself fire, itself sun, itself air, itself moon, itself the bright one, itself water and Prajāpati too" (S.19). Or again, "Vrātya (the highest God) was in a state of motion and gave an impulse to Prajāpati who saw gold in himself and further created the world. It became one; it became ornamental; it became great; it became the elder; it became the Brahman; it became the austerities; it became the truth; all came out of him. He began to grow, he became the great one, he became the great God" (S.20).

Talking of motion or the first impulse, we are reminded of the famous Aristotelian concept of the mover and the moved. It leads us to the unmoved Mover or the highest being. "The ultimate cause of this motion can only lie in an unmoved; for if all motion is due to the action of a mover on the moved and presupposes a mover different from the moved, the latter presupposes in its turn a mover

1 R.D. Ranade, Vedanta the Culmination of Indian Thought, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bombay 400 007, 1970, P.97

different from itself... Only the incorporeal is changeless and unmoved; and as form is perfect being and matter imperfect, the first mover must be absolutely perfect, that in which the scale of being reaches its highest point... the first mover, can only be one, the final cause itself. But pure incorporeal being can only be mind or thought. The ultimate basis of all motion lies, therefore, in the deity as the pure, perfect and inexhaustible mind."[1] Thus does Aristotle argue from the world to the deity; and in this, we come across a clear, logical and systematic cosmological argument for the existence of God. The Vedic sage had anticipated this unmoved Mover.

(c) The Ontological Argument. The ontological argument has a place when thought (चित्) and existence (सत्) are taken as two independent entities. But when one starts with their unity, the ontological argument is just superfluous. "The ontological argument – the argument from thought to being – when relieved of its imperfect syllogistic and, therefore, analytic form is simply the expression of that highest unity of thought and being which all knowledge presupposes as its beginning and seeks as its end. Idealism, in the sense that all things and beings constitute a system of relations which finds its unity in mind, that every intelligence contains in it the form of the universe, and that, therefore, all knowledge is but the discovery of that which is already our own – the awakening of a self-consciousness, which involves at the same time a consciousness of God – this Idealism is the real meaning of the ontological argument, and the only meaning in which it is defensible."[2] We find in the Vedas many Mantras where we find such identification of thought and existence. "That God who was born in the beginning, pervades the universe both from outside and from inside. He who is born in the past will be born in the future. He stands face to face with every thing" (S.21). The monistic spiritualism in this utterance conceals an ontological argument — nay, it is not an argument at all; it is but a plain way of giving

1 E. Zeller, Outlines of the History of Greek Philosophy, Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner and Co. Ltd., London, 1931, P. 177

2 E. Caird, The Critical Philosophy of Kant, Vol. II, P. 119

expression to his conviction that the highest spiritual principle exists in every place and at all times. The phrase प्रत्यङ् जनास्तिष्ठति सर्वतोमुखः (stands face to face with everything) is particularly noteworthy as it re-doubles the faith in the unity of thought and being. Similarly, "Having swiftly traversed the heaven and earth, as well as all the worlds and quarters, and thereafter piercing through the screen formed by the widespread threads of the eternal order (Ṛta), he saw That and became That as he was verily That already" (S.22). We have another important couplet where we get definite identification of thought and being; we are told that whatever possess a soul (Ātmanvat) exists in that great support, Skambha. "The heavens and the earth as created by the Skambha exist. Whatever possesses life, whatever winks, all that possesses a soul and exists in the Skambha" (S.23). The most important verse in this connection is found in the Nāsadīya Sūkta where a living, throbbing being is described as all that was existing. "There was no death nor was there anything that was indestructible. There was no night and no day. All that existed was something that was living and throbbing by itself" (S.24). Thus this kind of ontologism is taught in the Vedas.

(d) The Moral Argument. The Vedic seers wanted to construct no rational theology and offer no speculative 'proofs' for the existence of God. They had a deep-seated faith in Him which needed no proof. However as morality flows from God, it strengthens – does not create – the faith in the ultimate reality of God. The Ṛṣi starts from the fact that God is the source of morality. In that case, arguing from the incidence of morality to the existence of God would be only *petitio principii*. Still the invariable connection between morality and divinity fortifies the belief in the deity, wherever moral power is seen working. "An honest theologian... will realise that the existence of moral Deity can never be inferred with certainty from nature's structure and behaviour and that morality, not science, must be counted on to justify his faith in God and a cosmic moral order."[1] The moral proof for God is, therefore, not a logical proof, but only an expression of the certitude of faith. There is ample evidence in

1 T.M. Greene, (Ed), Kant, Selections, Charles Scrubner's Sons, New York, 1957, P. LXIX

the Vedas that the seers had a recourse to a line of thinking which amounts to a moral proof prevalent in the West. "Varuṇa looks on all impartially; but he also looks on people differentially. He stays in the same region as others; yet he stays in a special region. Varuṇa has contact with gods as also with men" (S.25). The purport is clear. Though Varuṇa treats all men without taking sides, it does not mean that he will be equally gracious to a saint and to a sinner. He will help the former, but punish the latter and will thus discriminate between them. Though he enjoys no special status as a deity, he certainly commands it as a moral overseer. He deals with gods who are exemplars of moral laws as well as with men whom he has to correct when they go wrong. Varuṇa seems to be the sovereign king and as such, he has to take care that no discord disturbs the running of the universe. Hence he has to see, like an administrator of law and order, that the divine laws are properly observed by men and proper arrangements are maintained in the society. Thus keeping contact with both gods and men, means bringing divine laws to earth.

Rewards and punishments are important ingredients of a neat and tidy administration and God as moral governor has to dispense them equitably. "Oh Ādityas, you know best how to wipe away our faults. Cover us with your benedictions as birds cover their young ones. Your favours are incomparable and indestructible (अनेहसः व ऊतयः), your aids are wonderful indeed (सुऊतयः व ऊतयः)," says the sage Trita Āptya (S.26). "When all the five groups in the society concentrate on Indra's worship and sing in his honour, Indra instantly makes short work of their adversaries and saves their honour" (S.27).

A peculiar characteristic of Vedic philosophising is a combination of physico-theological and moral proofs. We shall grossly underestimate the nature of the principle of Ṛta, if we call it merely a cosmic order; it is at the same time a moral one. No law can attain such a high status if it is only a cosmic law, and not a moral law too. Consequently he who controls Ṛta is both a cosmic and moral governor. We find in the Vedas that some deities are often rhymed together. Mitra and Varuṇa is one pair. Indra and Varuṇa is another. Here is the division of functions that are allotted to Indra and Varuṇa to uphold physical and moral well-being in the world. "Indra destroys

all enemies in battles and Varuṇa is ever engaged in implementing the holy rules and in maintaining discipline in society. We offer our prayers to you, Oh Indra and Varuṇa. Kindly give us your protection" (S.28). The Ādityas are assigned another function which is more important than maintaining regularity in the external world. "Those mighty Ādityas, profound and invincible, perceive through many eyes. They penetrate into the hearts of men (अन्तः पश्यन्ति) and find out their good or evil propensities" (S.29). Now Varuṇa is the moral *imperantis* and is responsible for both physical and moral standard. If, at his command, rivers flow into the ocean without overfilling it the least sin can not escape him (S.30). He is one of the Ādityas, the guardians of justice, and is described as having thousand eyes (S.31). Ṛṣi Brahmā reiterates the same thing: "He who crosses the region beyond the heaven, does not yet escape the secret servicemen of Varuṇa who inspect the region with their thousand eyes" (S.32). He not only judges proper and improper acts, but also executes justice. That is why his weapon is a noose (Pāśa), and he is called Pāśadhara. We read elsewhere: "The mighty ruler of the world beholds, as though from close at hand, the man who thinks that he acts by stealth. All this is seen by the lord. If a man moves in secret, or if two men whisper when they sit together, king Varuṇa knows it for he is present there as the third" (S.33).

Incidentally, it is a fact worth noting that even in Vedic times, a necessity of organising an Intelligence Bureau was felt. There are hymns which definitely indicate the existence of this agency. "Varuṇa wears a golden armour and covers his body with strong garments. Round about him are seated his spies or secret service-men" (S.34). "All the gods gladly and of their own accord, offered their might and help to you, Oh Mitra and Varuṇa, while exercising sovereignty over heaven and earth. Your spies are unobstructed and unbewildered" (S.35). There was a battalion of spies working under officers. "The vigilant spies of Varuṇa go on their inspection duty throughout heaven and earth, which are so excellently fashioned. Men performing religious rites, those with great wisdom and those engaged in sacrificial duties, all offer homage to Varuṇa" (S.36). The Vedic word for a spy is स्पश. It comes from the root स्पश् which

means: to obstruct, to undertake, to perform, to string together or to touch. This sums up the (mis) philosophy of the science of espionage. A spy obstructs or frustrates counter intelligence activities, i.e. he prevents the foreigners from discovering his own secrets; he undertakes or performs the duty of collecting intelligence; he collates or strings together or evaluates the collected information and, last but not the least, he touches i.e. he acts as a contact-man. The vigilance of the spies is proverbial. "These spies of gods who move here do not loiter or do not wink; O wanton, go quickly with some one other than me; with him go forward like the two wheels of a chariot" (S.37). This command to follow a person wherever he goes, is termed "shadowing" in intelligence parlance. We read a beautiful description of an officer who is very serious about his duties. The sage Ājīgarti Śunaḥśepa observes: "Varuṇa the mighty emperor, vowed to the implementation of the holy regulation (धृतव्रतः), takes his seat as a sovereign with a view to governing his subjects. Perceiving from that place, he surveys all the wonderful deeds that happen now or may happen in future" (S.38). This clearly indicates that he even anticipates the future moves of the enemy. Most efficient espionage! To realise that an intelligence wing is necessary to maintain social solidarity is a mark of practical wisdom of our forefathers.

If from cosmic order, we go to the cosmological argument, and from moral order to the moral argument, a combination in God of both cosmic and moral functions will give us a physico-ethico-theological argument. This is indeed a significant contribution of the Vedas to speculative theology at the dawn of thinking. All this does not mean that we get here intellectual acrobatics to prove the existence of God. For them God is a fact, a simple, experienced actuality and one need not present proofs for what one directly sees. Their vision of God was so vivid that there was not an iota of uncertainty about God's existence. And their motive in describing their God-visions was so pure that we can never express any doubt regarding the veracity of these experiences. On the contrary, what they have stated about the spiritual or religious experiences, about different modes of divine visions, has become the standard of truth

for the philosophers of futurity. The classical Indian philosophy, while discussing the criteria of truth has enumerated Śabda Pramāṇa or testimony as one of the criteria. It is recognised on all hands that the testimony to be acceptable must come from a source which is honest and unvitiated. Now, the supreme testimony for Indian thought always remains the Vedas and their off-shoot, the Upaniṣads. And this speaks volumes for the unsullied, immaculate and pure character of the utterances of the Ṛṣis of dateless antiquity. Their authenticity lies in the direct contact which the seers established with divinity. They saw God in their ecstatic state and this intuitive experience or Atīndriya Pratyakṣa set the standard of truth. Thus we may remark that what was pratyakṣa Pramāṇa (direct vision) for the Ṛṣis became the Śabda Pramāṇa (testimony) for later thinkers.

3. Epistemology of God–consciousness. The most natural attitude to understand a datum of experience is displayed by the Ṛṣis when they try to apprehend God. Every time, however, they have drawn a blank and come to the inevitable conclusion that God is unknowable. God is beyond the jurisdiction of the familiar, the knowable or the commonplace and the intellect can not reach even the outer limits, not to speak of fathoming the inner depths of the nature of God. Our knowledge has incurable limits and it can not jump out of itself to grasp what is essentially ungraspable. Our intellect is a mute witness to its own impotent character and gives in by confessing that the task of knowing the ultimate reality, is something which strikes it dumb. "No one can know you, Oh Viṣṇu, whose body grows without limit. We can scan only the earth and the mid-region. But you know the regions that spread beyond them. Neither the ancient ones nor those of today, know you. You established the heaven in the mid-region and supported the eastern horizon of the earth" observes the sage (S.39). "Who has, among the elders, known your might which is without any bounds? You have, from your body created the heaven and the earth" (S.40). The same attitude of owning ignorance is found in Ṛṣi Rebha Kāśyapa who says: "When the immortal gods can not carry their knowing faculty anywhere near you, how can the mere mortals aspire to collect you? You have, by your mighty power, covered the whole

universe. That is why gods remain ignorant of your nature" (S.41). Man's reason comes nowhere near God and it is to exemplify this same inability that the Saint of Umadi said: "Who has ever reached the end?" We have innumerable Mantras in the Vedas which bear witness to the agnostic tendency in the seers. God is so mighty and man so weak, He is such a great lord and man so poor a creature that it would be sheer audacity on the part of the latter to comprehend the former. Agnosticism, therefore, is the only correct attitude a man can adopt. "He, whom the gods, deities, men and waters could not know, has enveloped the earth by his might. May He, along with the Maruts, guard us" (S.42). "Some say that he was born of the sun. I think he was produced by the highest power. He came from anger, contend some. But only Indra knows from where he came" (S.43).

One very famous Sūkta from the Ṛgveda to illustrate the agnostic approach is the Nāsadīya Sūkta, "Who can elaborate on the details of creation? Who knows it for certain? Gods came after the creation; who can understand the nature of creation? That from which the world originated, whether it was created or not created, is known only to the presiding principle which resides in the highest heavens; or perhaps not known even to him" (S.44). Lokamānya Tilak's comments are very illuminating. "The Ṛṣi of this Sūkta has intuitively grasped that behind all the multiplicity of names and forms there stands the one eternal being. The Ṛṣi does not want to argue with those who say that in the beginning there was *Asat* or *Sat* or death or deathlessness and so on, because these are relativistic and dualistic concepts; and discursive language was evolved only after creation. When there was no differentiating principle whatsoever, no name could name the one pulsating being, nor could any thing cover it. What a bold assertion! Because it was vibrating, the primeval reality was not dead matter but conscious spirit. It is further pointed out that Brahman and Māyā, darkness and waters, are all descriptions of Brahman which later manifested itself through austerities. The original being is greater than everything and different from all created things. However, to describe it and to describe creation, we have to use the language

of duality and use the anthropomorphic concepts like mind, desire and so on. We can only say that Brahman desired, 'Let there be creation' and there was creation. The monistic rigour of this Sūkta is remarkable. Though it is not possible to grasp with the help of intellect the nature of creation, the Rsi does not bring in another principle like Prakṛti but sticks to his guns that Brahman alone was there at the beginning. Even gods who are a later creation could not know it; only Hiraṇyagarbha may perhaps know it, admits the seer. But the very next moment he says that one could not be sure that even Hiraṇyagarbha knew the nature of creation. After all, he is also one of the created beings and may not know the nature of the highest Brahman which is all-transcending. The Ṛṣi expresses his inability to spell out the nature of Brahman and the nature of creation, but does not stir from his original monistic stand. Philosophy has not yet gone beyond the Ṛṣi's intuitive grasp of Reality."[1] Thus the ultimate reality from the epistemological view-point remains the 'Wholly Other'.

4. The Metaphysical Characteristics of God. Metaphysics is a science which tries to determine the general nature of Reality. Characterisation of Reality as Sat-Cit-Ānanda, as Holy, as Absolute, as Nothingness or as Individual, are different ways of describing it. However, the view that Reality is Sat-Cit-Ānanda has crystallised into the lore of Indian philosophy. Protocol, therefore, requires that we touch this concept in dealing with the Vedic view of Reality, at the same time bearing in mind that roots of other views may also be found in these time-honoured Texts. The Vedic Mantras refuse to be bound by a rigorous logical frame-work, as they are expressions of direct vision of Truth. They may appear to be logically loose at times. To insist on the tying of loose ends or chiselling a monolithic systematic whole 'without any handles', is to arrest the living current of God-experience which flows freely and is fed freshly. However neatly designed the rules of dialectics may be, the flood of spiritual experience is sure to wash them away. The Vedic Ṛṣis have recorded their experience and have not philosophised in the strict sense of the

1 Gītā–rahasya (7th edition), Published by J.S. Tilak, 568 Narayan Peth, Pune, 411030, 1956, Pp. 241–245

term. We may well try to organise and portray them methodically for the sake of understanding them, but we must always bear in mind that a closed system is alien to the original Mantras and is only *our* way of presenting them.

(a) Existence, Consciousness, Bliss. God is said to be existing before anything came into being. "Prior to the creation of the world, Hiraṇyagarbha existed. He is the controller of the created world. He holds the earth and the heavens. We offer oblation to that one God" (S.45). "People respect Hiraṇyagarbha as the Highest. The supreme being, at the beginning, poured lustre into Hiraṇyagarbha" (S.46). The implication that the omnipresent is the source of lustre of Hiraṇyagarbha is clear. "Salutations to that great Brahman which is the glory of heaven and which sustains all — past, present and future" (S.47). The same ubiquitous existence is referred to in the famous Mantra since taken by the Iśa Upaniṣad. "Whatever resides in the universe is pervaded through and through by God" (S.48). He who realises the highest principle to be living in all beings, rises above his propensities. "A sage visualises all things in the supreme. For him who grasps the unity of all, how can grief or infatuation exist?" (S.49). The eternal principle is often referred to as existence. "In nature is lodged the sovereign principle which supports all beings that are created" (S.50). Or, "That which abides in nature, people regard as the Highest, and worship it" (S.51). By far the most important poem in this connection, is where Indra is said to be Satya; this can be interpreted either as the highest Truth or ultimate Being. His all-comprehensiveness, power, sovereignty or glory are indescribable. "Enhanced thousand times in valour by the power of intense devotion of the seers and saints, he (Indra) has become as vast as ocean. He is Truth incarnate. Hence I sing his glory and lordship in the assembly of saints and devotees, on occasions of worship" (S.52).

There is no dearth of verses which stress the aspect of consciousness in the highest reality. There is incessant activity; because, such is the very nature of the immortal principle. By its own authority it also makes the mortal to move. "The immortal one, associated with the mortal, moves back and forth by the force of its

inherent might. The two, however, move in opposite directions and therefore people can visualise the one while the other remains hidden from them" (S.53). Regarding the association of the mortal with the immortal, we read: "I myself have visualised the embodied soul, coming and going in its own unerring style. By its competence of conjunction and disjunction it keeps coming again and again to the mundane region" (S.54). Conjunction and disjunction obviously indicate the combination of the deathless soul with the earthly body and its separation from it. Of these two, the immortal, moving, active part is the real controller and is thus the ruler of the body. "Our humble salutations to Praṇa, the life-spirit which controls the whole of the universe. Prāṇa is the lord of all beings; in Prāṇa everything is situated" (S.55). A mystic talks of the undifferentiated state of the Atman at the beginning which, by and by, assumed articulated forms. "In the beginning the Atman stood without a foot, engrossed in its own suzerainty. He then developed four feet and began to enjoy every thing" (S.56). Other qualities which are ascribed to the highest being, speak of its life-giving nature. "May that mind which is knowledge, and consciousness and which is the enlivening flame in the created beings, that without which nothing takes place, resolve on what is good" (S.57). Mind here refers to the life-force in man. The one ever present conscious Being is domiciled in all its manifestations and is their steady foundation. "Oh Indra, your joy is for other peoples' profit; so are your energies. You are the bestower of power by which you sustain the gods" (S.58). "That which moves, falls or remains stable, that which controls the life-breath by releasing and holding it, that which winks or that which balances the earth, is One and only One" (S.59).

Coming to Ānanda, we find in the Vedas innumerable metrical hymns where God, referred to variously as Atman, Viṣṇu, Agni, Soma or Indra, is declared to be blissful. "I offer my prayer to Viṣṇu whose all three imperishable abodes are flooded with bliss. Alone he upholds the three-fold universe including heaven and earth" (S.60). "May I attain to that region so dear to him, where the ardent devotees dwell and experience the ecstatic joy. In that supreme realm of Visnu, the great strider, we have an ever bubbling fountain

of contentment. This is why Viṣṇu is the nearest of kin to us" (S.61). In another verse the self figures as partaking of the satisfying immortal morsel of serene life. "Whereon (on the cosmic tree) those fair-winged birds are ceaselessly hymning and struggling for a portion of the everlasting life, the mighty guardian of the universe is there above. He, the wise entered into myself" (S.62). "He, Agni, is like the divine sun. He discerns the truth and covers his devotees with his patronage throughout their struggles. He is the truth in its real form and is blissful like the self which is the sole object of contemplation and realisation" (S.63). Two points may be noted regarding this Ṛk: (i) Agni is said to be blissful like the Atman. Sāyaṇa has given an explanation. आत्मा इव परमप्रेमास्पदतया निरतिशय-आनंदस्वरूपः आत्मा यथा सर्वान् सुखयति i.e. Atman being endowed with supreme love is by nature blissful. Sāyaṇa also refers to Taittirīya Upaniṣad II.7.1 where the happy and happiness-giving nature of Atman is discussed. (ii) The Yoga-sūtras have talked of Anuttama-sukha or superlative happiness (II.42), which comes to a man of contentment. Contentment (Santoṣa) as we know, is only a landmark on the way of achieving the Yogic ideal. Even this stage is full of well-being. Thus we can say that cheerfulness becomes the prerogative of the aspirant who sincerely walks on the pathway to God. A prayer addressed to Soma also enumerates this quality. "Oh Soma, you are unconquerable and full of happiness. Keep flowing, oh Soma; you form the main part of the offering to Indra. Those who control their minds praise you and pay homage to you" (S.64). All sorts of satisfying states are traced back to Ucchiṣṭa, the term meaning 'that which remains in the uppermost region' and this is surely the Paramātman. "The bliss, delight, exhileration, joy or happiness, as well as the gods who live in the heavens have come from Ucchiṣṭa" (S.65). When man is confronted with something great, mysterious and powerful, his natural reaction is to bow before it. "Obeisance to him who is a carrier of delight and felicity, who blesses and bestows happiness, who is benign and yet more benign" (S.66).

(b) Some Pseudo-spatial Considerations. The next question generally asked is : Where do we find God? Immanence and

transcendence are the properties that demand our attention. These may appear to refer to the space-filling nature of God. But such talk is irrelevant here. 'Outside' and 'inside' are not spatial stamps, they are artifacts of an intellect drenched in spatial ideas. They are to be taken as just working symbols. The Ṛṣi may say that God makes everything His resting place but he does not cling to mere immanence. God is outside too. In fact he is immano-transcendent. Let us enumerate some verses, keeping in mind that immanence and transcendence are only ideograms into which we try to fit the description of God. (i) Immanence: we shall here consider passages where we notice higher and higher involvement of God in the world. We shall first note a couple of Mantras where God is said to be present inside everything. We shall then pass on to the notion of Him as holding objects like an inner thread, then as a haven of all, and finally as the source of the world. We shall then see how He is identified with the living force in mortals. We shall next pick up a couple of Mantras in which God is pantheistically depicted as non-different from the world. A veritable climax to the series! "This earth belongs to king Varuṇa. So also the heaven which is vast and far away belongs to him; both the seas are contained in his belly and he is as well hidden in this small drop of water," asserts the sage Brahmā (S.67). "Agni is an indweller of water, indweller of trees and creepers, indweller of movable and immovable existences. Man prostrates before Agni wheresoever situated be He, in the sacrificial hall or inside a rock" (S.68). A very popular notion to indicate an inner existence is to call it a thread. "He who knows the thread round which are woven the created things, and who knows the thread of all threads knows Brahman. I know the thread round which are woven the created things, as well as the thread of threads. I, therefore, know Brahman" (S.69). One verse declares that the lord is present in fire, in waters as in men; he creates and holds the world (S.70). "He who runs the chariot of the universe holds the earth, the heaven and the mid-region. He holds the six principal quarters. He enters into every dwelling" (S.71). Then we come across a celebrated passage which has been picked up by the poet, Rabindra Nath Tagore as the motto for Viśva-Bhāratī — यत्र विश्वं भवति एकनीडम् (where the universe makes its home in a single nest). "Vena beheld

that supreme principle hidden inside, where the entire existence is stored up in one resting place. In it every thing unites and from it every thing flows. He is the warp and the woof of the universe" (S.72). In one Ṛk, God is solemnly declared to be the life-force in the mortals. "Agni is the first sacrificer. He is the life-principle in those who are subject to death (अमृतं मर्त्येषु). Though immortal, he as if grows along with the mortal body and remains stable in the sacrifice of life" (S.73). Lastly we shall see two Mantras, in one of which God is described, Spinozistically, as identical with the world and in the second, as himself being all gods. "He was born and knew his own mother and father. A great giver, he brings under his sway the celestial sphere as also the mid-region. He becomes the world and is omnipresent" (S.74). The pantheistic tinge is worth noting. "Oh Agni, you are Indra the leader of sages; you yourself are the revered Viṣṇu of unfading fame. You are Brahmā the bestower of divine prowess. All intellectual abilities take resort to your feet. You are none other than Varuṇa whose dictates are inviolable and the brave Mitra too. You are not different from Aryamā the sovereign of all men as well as Amśa who confers wealth in the sacrificial hall. You are Tvaṣṭā and so give valour to worshippers. You shine like Mitra with regal splendour which is also present in the universe. Like the flash of lightning, you endow men with reason and represent the indomitable spirit in them" (S.75). The concept of immanence has here crossed its own limits and has brought us very near monism. (ii) Immano-transcendence. The classification of hymns as per these qualities is more or less of an academic nature. It is never rigid. The emphasis may shift from one quality to another. Still it is justifiable to treat the verses under the single heading namely immano–transcendence. " Oh friend of gods," says one couplet, "I shall ask something of you only if you would give thought to it. Was or was not the whole world covered by three places where Viṣṇu was worshipped?" (S.76). "What is that wherein Ādityas, Rudras and Vasus take their abode? Wherein are the present, the past and the future established? What is that in which all the worlds are anchored?" (S.77). Then we have one verse where the immeasurability of Godhead is expressed both in its signal radiance and in its superlative extensiveness. "Even

though hundreds of heavens and hundreds of earths come together, they will fall short of your magnitude. Even though thousands of suns shine simultaneously, their light will be miserably paltry" (S.78). God is also referred to as the overplus, that which transcends all possible estimates. He is the Divine MORE to use William James' phraseology. "He has encircled the whole earth and over-shadowed the blazing heavens. No one is yet born nor will any one be born who can be compared with you, Oh Indra. You have outgrown the universe" (S.79). Over-stepping is a characteristic which is a category apart, indicating some thing more, some thing different, some thing beyond our common measures. It does not speak only of quantitative vastness; it is also a special quality or peculiarity of God which makes Him stand apart from the world as a unique something. In this very sense, the Brahma-sūtra अधिकं तु भेदनिर्देशात् (II.1.22) uses the word Adhika. As Śamkara comments: God is 'additional to' (Adhika), i.e. different from the individual self. In the Vedas we have a couple of verses where immano-transcendence is clearly seen. "May you attain to that one who is the Lord of the world of light. He is present every where and being the earliest one, he is present in all newly created things. There are many paths which lead to him" (S.80). The mention of pathways indicates the over-stretching nature. "There is a wheel with one single navel in the middle and with thousands of spokes. It swings back and forth. Only a half of it goes into the creation of the universe; where can the other half be?" (S.81). Transcendence is present on the face of this psalm as well as in the oft-quoted Mantra in the Puruṣa–sūkta where God is described as enveloping the whole creation without being exhausted. "Puruṣa is thousand-headed and thousand-eyed. Thousand-footed is He. Having covered the entire earth, He stands apart by ten fingers" (S.82).

(c) Some Pseudo-numerical Considerations. If spatial attributes are inapplicable to God, so are the numerical ones. Therefore, any discussion pertaining to many gods or one God, is only a method of arranging Vedic anthology. (i) Polytheism. It is common knowledge that there are a number of deities to whom prayers are addressed in the Vedas. In some poems, gods are treated as equals of each other;

in some, they are said to be subordinate to one chief God. "None of you, Oh gods, is a child and no one a mere youth. You are, all of you, equally great" (S.83). "Eleven of you are in heavens, eleven on earth and eleven in the mid-region. Be pleased to accept our offerings" (S.84). The seer Atharvan sings the praises of many gods who inhabit the body of some great God. "Tell me who He is, in whose body thirty-three gods have settled. In His body reside the thirty three gods and those who knew him know also the thirty three gods" (S.85). The sages proclaimed that inspite of many manifestations, the basic reality underlying all of them is always the same. This definitely is a departure from the many-gods-theory and an approach to one-God-concept. "Agni who is kindled in different places, is verily only one. Sūrya who lights up the entire universe, is but one. Uṣas who illumines all this, is only one. That which is one, has assumed a multitude of forms" (S.86). "To Him belongs sovereign power. He is the One, the one alone" (S.87). The gods are said to be innumerable, but Agni has been given the place of *primus inter pares*. "Three thousand three hundred and thirty nine gods served Agni. They sprinkled him with ghee, they offered him a Kuśa seat and enthroned him" (S.88). And thus we are automatically led to monotheism. We are told by Vedic scholars that in between polytheism and monotheism, there was a stage, which they term henotheism. The last of the above mentioned Mantras may be said to imply that idea. Henotheism represents a halting position where one particular deity, is given sovereign importance. But the present work is not a historical survey of the development of Vedic thought, nor is it a study of the Vedic pantheon. From a metaphysical point of view, it only concerns us to see whether there are supposed to be many realities or only one Reality. (ii) Monotheism. The existence of one God is expressed in a number of hymns. "Here is Lord Varuṇa. He is called Agni in the evening and Mitra in the morning. He becomes Savitṛ and roams in the mid-region and shines in the heavens by becoming Indra" (S.89). Similar is the import of the following lyric. "He himself is Agni and Āditya, Vāyu and Candramā, Śukra, Brahman and the waters and Prajāpati, the creator" (S.90). We get an explanation of the manifold appearances of the same God in another ode (S.91). This poem attributes manifoldness to the

inscrutable power (Māyā) which Indra possesses. Here comes the word Māyā or illusion which became the veritable battle-field for philosophers to come. The Vedic utterance is innocent of that technical aspect of the concept, as the word is used here only as God's mysterious power. The same bewildering aura surrounds the word Yakṣa, which is at times used to indicate the sovereign being. Yakṣa is, to use Otto's terminology, an 'un-thing'; no one can say what it is or where it comes from; it is simply an overwhelming presence. "In the centre of the universe, there is a Yakṣa, a great venerable God, moving on the surface of the waters supplying energy to all. All gods have their abode in him as if they are branches of a tree" (S.92). Those who study the Vedas, can not ever miss the famous Puruṣa-sūkta, the hymn of Man which is found in all the four Vedas. Herein Ṛṣi Nārāyaṇa describes the cosmic form of Man, a timeless all-that-there-is, three quarters of whom created heavens and only one quarter remained here. From there he spread himself everywhere (S.93). The wording is through and through pantheistic. From the Puruṣa are born the elements, the creatures, the sun and moon, even the Vedic chants and meters. Like the Viśvarūpa (cosmic form) later broadcast by the eleventh canto of the Bhagavad-gītā, the Virāṭ Puruṣa in the Vedas represents the Primeval Being, holding the seeds of the world in its belly, and stretching beyond directions by its enormity. In both the Vedic and the Gītā descriptions, the *Numinous* or the *Mysterium Tremendum* is experienced; in the Vedas more in its character as mysterium and in the Bhagavad-gītā more in its character as tremendum. The Vedic conception of God is not confined only to His cosmic aspect. It touches other aspects also. "Let the gods inhabiting all the seven places conquered by Viṣṇu shelter us. Viṣṇu encircled the entire universe, placed his feet at three places whereby the whole world was covered by the dust of his feet. He established Dharma at the three places. He observes your conduct from those places and in turn his deeds are open to you. Viṣṇu is a great friend of Indra" (S.94). In the first place Viṣṇu is here described as a cosmic creator. Madhvācārya mentions in his commentary that Vedas, time, qualities, worlds, gods and men, in a word, the living, the non-living and that which is the mixture of the two, is all enveloped by Viṣṇu. Secondly, Viṣṇu is a creator of social

rules and regulations. Thirdly, he is an ideal ruler who watches the activities of men and whose own activities are open for inspection by men. Here the theistic ideal of a valiant, just and kind ruler stands in bold relief. "Oh Indra and Varuṇa, one of you is a sovereign (Samrāṭ) and the other a self-ruler (Svarāṭ). Both of you are mighty" (S.95). A Samrāṭ rules over other kings and therefore that concept can be said to be a relative one. When there are no subordinates, no one can be called a Samrāṭ; similarly no God is a Samrāṭ in the absence of others. Swarāṭ, however, implies self-rule — he is almighty or a ruler of himself, or ruler of an inner kingdom and has nothing to do with others. As Spinoza's Substance exists in itself and is conceived through itself, so is the Svarāṭ who shines in the majesty of passionless serenity. This is the archetype of the concept of a wise man of the Stoics and the Epicureans. He is characterised by *apathia* (emotionlessness) and *ataraxia* (imperturbability) respectively, is not disturbed by evil in the outer world. No one can control natural calamities like earthquakes or volcanos. But the wise man conquers the emotions arising out of the natural calamities; and hence he can be said to have conquered nature. Controlling excessive heat means controlling the pain caused by it. Victory over death is victory over sad emotions caused by death of dear and near ones. The wise man is "so independent of externals, his happiness so perfect and his wisdom so inalienable that... he walks as a God among men and that even on bread and water he need not envy Zeus."[1] In his demeanour the wise man of the Greeks is a replica of the Svarāṭ of the Vedas and the Upaniṣads. Later on, the Svarāṭ became the Buddha or the enlightened soul in Buddhistic thought as he became the Jina or the conqueror in Jaina ethics. Unless one has absolute control over oneself (Svarāṭ), one is not entitled to rule over others (Samrāṭ). A real Samrāṭ is first a Svarāṭ and then a Samrāṭ, if at all. Thus from a conception of a cosmic being, we pass on to the concept of the self as the highest Being through an intermediary stage of different deities having their sway over different domains of life. (iii) Monism. The line between monotheism and monism is very thin in Vedic metaphysics. Often the seers refer to a particular deity by name; but

1 E. Zeller, Outlines of the History of Greek Philosophy, P. 239

the attributes connoted speak not so much of a specific God, as of the omniscient or omnipresent Being; not so much of one God, as of one Principle. Monotheism would require acceptance of one single God with attributes (Saguṇa Īśvara), while monism would do away with the name and form of such a deity and speak only of quality-less Brahman (Nirguṇa Brahman). Theoretically the bifurcation may be rigid, but from the point of view of spiritual experience, there can not be any flawless sorting. The hymns describing spiritual experience, can fit in both the Saguṇa and the Nirguṇa categories. We may cite an example. "I respectfully proclaim the wonderful and mighty power of the renowned immortal God Varuṇa who, standing high above in the mid-region, has scanned the earth with the measure of the sun. None verily could outweigh or challenge the tremendous power of the omnipotent and omniscient God, just as the water of all the lucid rivers watering the earth put together, can not make the sea overflow" (S.96). Here the name of Varuṇa is mentioned; and hence the passage suggests monotheism; but the implication of the Mantra is the immeasurable and incomprehensible potency of the highest Being that be, or an undecipherable authority before which the creatures are almost crippled. It cannot be spelt out to be either physical, mental or rational power; it just suggests the lordship of the world-ruler. That is why we would better class this Mantra as monistic in import. While commenting on this Mantra, Sāyaṇa remarks that it should be understood to refer to the highest Reality rather than to Varuṇa, the God of waters – कर्म परमेश्वरस्यैव उचितं न वरुणस्य इति न वाच्यं तस्य वरुणादि रूपावस्थानात् (it is the supreme Brahman which can discharge the function of serving as the world-ground and not Varuṇa. The highest Being only manifests itself in forms like Varuṇa).

We shall consider in the sequel a couple of Mantras the monistic interpretation of which would be natural, though the Mantras can be understood monotheistically as well. Therein are mentioned various predicates of the highest reality, namely, the greatest, omnipresent, omniscient, imperishable, going beyond time and space, perfect first cause, immortal and inscrutable in-dweller, or self-existent. "Viśvakarman is powerful in mind. He is the creator, sustainer and

eternal presence" (S.97). The seer Atharvan speaks of one omniscient Being (Ekarṣi) (S.98). Then comes the concept of the Absolute as inclusive of both time and space. "The endless is stretched everywhere. That which has no end is intermingled with that which has an end. It encompasses the past, the present and the future and moves about sustaining every thing" (S.99). The idea of an all-inclusive reality has run through philosophical thought both in the east and the west. It is the Brahman of the Vedas and the Upaniṣads, the Śūnya of Buddhists and Vīraśaiva thinkers, the Substance of Spinoza, the concrete Universal of Hegel or the Absolute of Bradley. There is parity between the infinite in mathematics and the infinite in metaphysics. In both, infinity added to infinity results in infinity; and infinity subtracted from infinity remains infinity. "From the whole emerges the whole. By the whole is the whole sprinkled with life. Hence, we shall know the source from which the sprinkling is carried out" (S.100). This is surely a reference to the first cause of everything. One need not sojourn far away to collect the highest; for It has moorings in the inner depths of beings. "In the nine petalled lotus of the human body encased by three qualities, Sattva, Rajas and Tamas, resides a mysterious Being, the immortal Self whom the wise know. Desireless, serene, immortal, self-existent, content with the inner core, perfect is He. He who knows this magnanimous, ageless principle, has no fear of death" (S.101). The theistic-absolutistic description leans towards absolutism or even illusionism when Ṛṣi Bṛhâduktha Vāmadevya labels the famed exploits of Indra as just make-belief. "Statements like 'Indra the strong, roamed around exhibiting his might' or the narrations of his battles are all fallacious. Oh Indra, you have no enemy today and you have had none in the past" (S.102). The process of the elimination of the theistic substantive is complete with this utterance.

It is remarkable that the Vedic thinker was aware that Reality was predicateless existence. No predicate predicates it, no name names it, no quality qualifies it, no character characterises it. It defies all description. To illustrate the point we may consider a cluster of four Mantras. (i) "One may speak of Indra, Mitra, Varuṇa Agni or the beautiful-winged Garutman. But there is only a single Reality, though named also as Yama or Mātariśvan" (S.103). Here

Reality is termed *Sat* by the sage Dīrghatamas Aucathya. (ii) In another Mantra the emphasis is shifted to *Asat*. Ṛṣi Laukya Bṛhaspati asserts: "In the early age of Gods, came existence from non existence" (S.104). (iii) The Muni Trita Āptya characterises Reality as both *Sat* and *Asat*. "Agni is both non-existent and existent" (S.105). (iv) Lastly Ṛṣi Prajāpati Parameṣṭhī completes the circle by calling reality neither *Sat* nor *Asat* (S.106). The four Mantras taken together give us a four-fold scheme.

Reality is;

Reality is not;

Reality both is an is not;

Reality neither is nor is not.

These are at best speculative assertions, and would not satisfy the Vedic Ṛṣi. Is not reality beyond the purview of the four-fold model? "Yes", says the humble mystic, "it is not given to me to know even this much; only He himself may know what it is; or He also may not know: सो अंग वेद यदि वा न वेद" (S.107).

SOURCES-III

1. येन कर्माण्यपसो मनीषिणो यज्ञे कृण्वंति विदथेषु धीराः।
   यत् अपूर्वं यक्षं अंतः प्रजानां तन्मे मनः शिवसंकल्पमस्तु।। यजुर्वेद XXXIV.2

2. अनत् शये तुरगातु जीवम् एजत् ध्रुवं मध्ये आ पस्त्यानाम्।
   जीवो मृतस्य चरति स्वधाभिः अमर्त्यो मर्त्येना सयोनिः।। ऋग्वेद I.164.30

3. यत्र तपः पराक्रम्य व्रतं धारयति उत्तरम्।
   ऋतं च यत्र श्रद्धा च आपो ब्रह्म समाहिताः स्कंभं तं ब्रूहि कतमः स्विदेव सः।।
   अथर्ववेद X.7.11

4. यस्मादिंद्राद् बृहतः किं चनेमृते विश्वान्यस्मिन् त्संभृताधिवीर्या।
   जठरे सोमं तन्वी सहो महो हस्ते वज्रं भरति शीर्षणि ऋतुम्।। ऋग्वेद II.16.2

5. यस्मै हस्ताभ्यां पादाभ्यां वाचा श्रोत्रेण चक्षुषा।
यस्मै देवाः सदा बलिं प्रयच्छन्ति विमिते अमितं स्कम्भं तं ब्रूहि कतमः स्विदेव सः।।
अथर्ववेद X.7.39

6. को ददर्श प्रथमं जायमानं अस्थन्वंतं यदनस्था बिभर्ति।
भूम्या असुः असृग् आत्मा क्वस्वित् को विद्वांसं उप गात् प्रष्टुमेतत्।।
ऋग्वेद I.164.4

7. अद्भ्यः संभृतः पृथिव्यै रसाच्च विश्वकर्मणः समवर्ततााग्रे।
तस्य त्वष्टा विदधद्रूपमेति तन्मर्त्यस्य देवत्वमाजानमग्रे।। यजुर्वेद XXXI.17

8. कालो अमूं दिवमजनयत् काल इमाः पृथिवीरुत।
काले ह भूतं भव्यं चेषितं ह वि तिष्ठते।।
कालो भूतिं असृजत काले तपति सूर्यः।
काले ह विश्वाभूतानि काले चक्षुः वि पश्यति।।
काले मनः काले प्राणः काले नाम समाहितम्।
कालेन सर्वा नंदंति आगतेन प्रजा इमाः।।
काले तपः काले ज्येष्ठं काले ब्रह्म समाहितम्।
कालो ह सर्वस्य ईश्वरः यः पितासीत् प्रजापतेः।।
तेनेषितं तेन जातं तदु तस्मिन् प्रतिष्ठितम्।
कालो ह ब्रह्म भूत्वा बिभर्ति परमेष्ठिनम्।।
कालः प्रजा असृजत कालो अग्रे प्रजापतिम्।
स्वयंभूः कश्यपः कालात् तपः कालात् अजायत।।
अथर्ववेद XIX.53.5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10

9. कालो अश्वो वहति सप्तरश्मिः सहस्राक्षो अजरो भूरिरेताः।
तमा रोहंति कवयो विपश्चितः तस्य चक्रा भुवनानि विश्वा।। अथर्ववेद XIX.53.1

10. ऋतं च सत्यं चाभीद्धात् तपसो अध्यजायत।
ततो रात्रि अजायत ततः समुद्रो अर्णवः।।
समुद्रात् अर्णवात् अधि संवत्सरो अजायत।
अहोरात्राणि विदधत् विश्वस्य मिषतो वशी।। ऋग्वेद X.190.1, 2

11. सूर्याचंद्रमसौ धाता यथापूर्वम् अकल्पयत्।
दिवं च पृथिवीं च अंतरिक्षं अथो स्वः।। ऋग्वेद X.190.3

12. आपो ह यद्बृहतीर्विश्वमायन् गर्भं दधाना जनयन्तीरग्निम्।
ततो देवानां समवर्ततासुरेकः कस्मै देवाय हविषा विधेम।। ऋग्वेद X.121.7

13. ब्रह्मणस्पतिरेता सं कर्मार इव आधमत्।
देवानां पूर्व्ये युगे असतः सदजायत।।
देवानां युगे प्रथमेऽसतः सदजायत।
तदाशा अन्वजायन्त तदुत्तानपदस्परि।।
भूर्जज्ञ उत्तानपदो भुव आशा अजायंत।
अदितेर्दक्षो अजायत दक्षात् उ अदितिः परि।। ऋग्वेद X.72.2, 3, 4

14. द्वे इदस्य क्रमणे स्वर्दृशो ऽभिख्याय मर्त्यो भुरण्यति।
तृतीयमस्य नकिरा दधर्षति वयश्चन पतयंतः पतत्रिणः।। ऋग्वेद I.155.5

15. पिता जनितुरुच्छिष्टोऽसोः पौत्रः पितामहः।
स क्षियति विश्वस्येशानो वृषा भूम्यामतिघ्न्यः।। अथर्ववेद XI.7.16

16. बृहन्तो नाम ते देवा येऽसतः परि जज्ञिरे।
एकं तदङ्गं स्कम्भस्यासदाहुः परो जनाः।। अथर्ववेद X.7.25

17. तवेमाः प्रजा दिव्यस्य रेतसस्त्वं विश्वस्य भुवनस्य राजसि।
अथेदं विश्वं पवमान ते वशे त्वमिन्दो प्रथमो धामधा असि।। ऋग्वेद IX.86.28

18. किं स्विद् वनं क उ स वृक्ष आस यतो द्यावापृथिवी निष्टतक्षुः।
संतस्थाने अजरे इतऊती अहानि पूर्वीरुषसो जरंत।।
नैतावदेना परो ऽन्यदस्ति उक्षा स द्यावापृथिवी बिभर्ति।
त्वचं पवित्रं कृणुत स्वधावाम् यदीं सूर्यं न हरितो वहंति।। ऋग्वेद X.31.7, 8

19. तदेवाग्निः तदादित्यः तद्वायुः तदु चंद्रमाः।
तदेव शुक्रम् तद् ब्रह्म ता आपः स प्रजापतिः।। यजुर्वेद XXXII.1

20. व्रात्यः आसीत् ईयमानः एव स प्रजापतिं समैरयत्।।
स प्रजापतिः सुवर्णं आत्मन् अपश्यत् तत् प्राजनयत्।।
तदेकं अभवत् तल्ललाममभवत् तन्महदभवत् तज्ज्येष्ठमभवत्
तद् ब्रह्मा भवत् तत्तपोऽभवत् तत् सत्यमभवत् तेन प्राजायत।।
सोऽवर्धत स महान् अभवत् स महादेवोऽभवत्।। अथर्ववेद XV.1.1, 2, 3, 4

21. एषो ह देवः प्रदिशोऽनु सर्वाः पूर्वोह जातः स उ गर्भे अन्तः।
सऽ एव जातः स जनिष्यमाणः प्रत्यङ् जनास्तिष्ठति सर्वतोमुखः।। यजुर्वेद XXXII.4

22. परि द्यावापृथिवी सद्य इत्वा परि लोकान् परि दिशः परि स्वः।
ऋतस्य तंतुं विततं विचृत्य, तदपश्यत् तदभवत् तदासीत्।। यजुर्वेद XXXII.12

23. स्कंभेन इमे विष्टभिते द्यौश्च भूमिश्च तिष्ठतः।
स्कंभे इदं सर्वं आत्मन्वत् यत् प्राणत् निमिषत् च यत्।। अथर्ववेद X.8.2

24. न मृत्युरासीदमृतं न तर्हि। न रात्र्या अह्न आसीत्प्रकेतः।
आनीदवातं स्वधया तदेकं तस्माद्धान्यन्न परः किं च ना ऽ ऽ स।। ऋग्वेद X.129.2

25. यः समाभ्यो वरुणो यो व्याभ्यो यः संदेश्यो वरुणो यो विदेश्यः।
यो दैवो वरुणो यश्च मानुषः।। अथर्ववेद IV.16.8

26. विदा देवा अघानामादित्यासो अपाकृतिम्।
पक्षा वयो यथोपरि व्यस्मे शर्म यच्छतानेहसो व ऊतयः सुऊतयो व ऊतयः।।
ऋग्वेद VIII.47.2

27. यत् पाञ्चजन्यया विशेन्द्रे घोषा असृक्षत।
अस्तृणाद्बर्हणा विपो ऽर्यो मानस्य स क्षयः।। ऋग्वेद VIII.63.7

28. वृत्राण्यन्यः समिथेषु जिघ्नते व्रतानि अन्यो अभि रक्षते सदा।
हवामहे वां वृषणा सुवृक्तिभिरस्मे इन्द्रावरुणा शर्म यच्छतम्।। ऋग्वेद VII.83.9

29. त आदित्यास उरवो गभीरा अदब्धासो दिप्सन्तो भूर्यक्षाः।
अन्तः पश्यन्ति वृजिनोत साधु सर्वं राजभ्यः परमा चिदन्ति।। ऋग्वेद II.27.3

30. इमामू नु कवितमस्य मायां महीं देवस्य नकिरा दधर्ष।
एकं यदुद्वा न पृणन्त्येनीः आसिञ्चन्तीरवनयः समुद्रम्।। ऋग्वेद V.85.6

31. आ चष्ट आसां पाथो नदीनां वरुण उग्रः सहस्रचक्षाः। ऋग्वेद VII.34.10

32. उत यो द्यामति सर्पात् परस्तात् न स मुच्यातै वरुणस्य राज्ञः।
दिव स्पशः प्र चरंतीदमस्य सहस्राक्षा अति पश्यंति भूमिम्।। अथर्ववेद IV.16.4

33. यः तिष्ठति चरति यश्च वंचति यो निलायं चरति यः प्रतंकम्।
द्वौ संनिषद्य यत् मंत्रयेते राजा तत् वेदवरुणः तृतीयः।। अथर्ववेद IV.16.2

34. बिभ्रद् द्रापिं हिरण्ययं वरुणो वस्त निर्णिजम् परि स्पशो नि षे दिरे।। ऋग्वेद I.25.13

35. विश्वे यद्वां मंहना मन्दमानाः क्षत्रं देवासो अदधुः सजोषाः।
परि यद्द्यूथो रोदसी चिदुर्वी सन्ति स्पशो अदब्धासो अमूराः।। ऋग्वेद VI.67.5

36. परि स्पशो वरुणस्य स्मदिष्टा उभे पश्यन्ति रोदसी सुमेके।
ऋतावानः कवयो यज्ञधीराः प्रचेतसो य इषयन्त मन्म।। ऋग्वेद VII.87.3

37. न तिष्ठन्ति न नि मिषन्त्येते देवानां स्पश इह ये चरन्ति।
अन्येन मदाहनो याहि तूयं तेन विवृह रथ्येव चक्रा।। ऋग्वेद X.10.8

38. नि षसाद धृतव्रतो वरुणः पस्त्यास्वा। साम्राज्याय सुक्रतुः।।
अतो विश्वानि अद्भुता चिकित्वान् अभि पश्यति। कृतानि या च कर्त्वा।।
ऋग्वेद I.25.10, 11

39. परो मात्रया तन्वा वृधान न ते महित्वमन्वश्नुवंति।
उभे ते विद्म रजसी पृथिव्या विष्णो देव त्वं परमस्य वित्से।।
न ते विष्णो जायमानो न जातो देव महिम्नः परमंतमाप।
उदस्तभ्ना नाकमृष्वं बृहंतं दाधर्थ प्राचीं ककुभं पृथिव्याः।। ऋग्वेद VII.99.1, 2

40. क उ नु ते महिमनः समस्याऽस्मत् पूर्व ऋषयः अंतमापुः।
यन्मातरं च पितरं च साकम् अजनयथाः तन्वः स्वायाः।। ऋग्वेद X.54.3

41. न त्वा देवास आशत न मर्त्यासो अद्रिवः।
विश्वा जातानि शवसाभिभूरसि न त्वा देवास आशत।। ऋग्वेद VIII.97.9

42. न यस्य देवा देवता न मर्ता आपश्चन शवसो अंतमापुः।
स प्ररिक्वा त्वक्षसा क्ष्मो दिवश्च मरुत्वान् नो भवत्विंद्र ऊती।। ऋग्वेद I.100.15

43. अश्वात् इयायेति यद्वदंति ओजसो जातमुत मन्य एनम्।
मन्योरियाय हर्म्येषु तस्थौ यतः प्रजज्ञ इंद्रो अस्य वेद।। ऋग्वेद X.73.10

44. को अद्धा वेद कः इह प्र वोचत् कुतः आजाता कुतः इयं विसृष्टिः।
अर्वाग् देवाः अस्य विसर्जनेन अथा को वेद यत आबभूव।।
इयं विसृष्टिः यतः आबभूव यदि वा दधे यदि वा न।
यो अस्य अध्यक्षः परमे व्योमन् सो अंग वेद यदि वा न वेद।।
ऋग्वेद X.129.6-7

45. हिरण्यगर्भः समवर्तताग्रे भूतस्य जातः पतिरेकः आसीत्।
स दाधार पृथिवीं द्यामुतेमां कस्मै देवाय हविषा विधेम।। ऋग्वेद X.121.1

46. हिरण्यगर्भं परमं अनति उद्यम् जनाः विदुः।
स्कंभः तद् अग्रे प्रासिंचत् हिरण्यम् लोके अंतरा।। अथर्ववेद X.7.28

47. यो भूतं च भव्यं च सर्वं यश्चाधितिष्ठति।
स्वर्यस्य च केवलं तस्मै ज्येष्ठाय ब्रह्मणे नमः।। अथर्ववेद X.8.1

48. ईशावास्यमिदं सर्वं यत्किं च जगत्यां जगत्।
तेन त्यक्तेन भुंजीथाः मा गृधः कस्य स्वित् धनम्।। यजुर्वेद XL.1

49. यस्मिन् सर्वाणि भूतानि आत्मैवाभूत् विजानतः।
तत्र को मोहः कः शोकः एकत्वमनुपश्यतः।। यजुर्वेद XL.7

50. असति सत् प्रतिष्ठितं सति भूतं प्रतिष्ठितम्।
भूतं ह भव्य आहितं भव्यं भूते प्रतिष्ठितं, तवोद्विष्णो बहुधा वीर्याणि।
त्वं नः पृणीहि पशुभिर्विश्वरूपैः सुधायां मा धेहि परमे व्योमन्।। अथर्ववेद XVII.1.19

51. असच्छाखां प्रतिष्ठन्तीं परममिव जना विदुः।
उतो सन्मन्यन्तेऽवरे ये ते शाखामुपासते।। अथर्ववेद X.7.21

52. अयं सहस्रमृषिभिः सहस्कृतः समुद्र इव पप्रथे।
सत्यः सो अस्य महिमा गृणे शवो यज्ञेषु विप्रराज्ये।। ऋग्वेद VIII.3.4

53. अपाङ् प्राङ् एति स्वधया गृभीतः अमर्त्यो मर्त्येना सयोनिः।
ता शश्वंता विषूचीना वियंता नि अन्यं चिक्युः न नि चिक्युः अन्यम्।। ऋग्वेद I.164.38

54. अपश्यं गोपां अनिपद्यमानमा च परा च पथिभिश्चरंतम्।
स सध्रीचीः स विषूचीः वसानः आ वरीवर्ति भुवनेष्वंतः।। अथर्ववेद IX.10.11

55. प्राणाय नमो यस्य सर्वमिदं वशे। यो भूतः सर्वस्य ईश्वरः यस्मिन् सर्वं प्रतिष्ठितम्।
अथर्ववेद XI.4.1

56. अपाद् अग्रे समभवत् सो अग्रे स्वराभरत्।
चतुष्पाद् भूत्वा भोग्यः सर्वमादत्त भोजनम्।। अथर्ववेद X.8.21

57. यत् प्रज्ञानं उत चेतो धृतिश्च यत् ज्योतिरन्तरमृतं प्रजासु।
यस्मात् न ऋते किं चन कर्म क्रियते तन्मे मनः शिवसंकल्पमस्तु।।
यजुर्वेद XXXIV.3

58. सत्रा मदासस्तव विश्वजन्याः सत्रा रायोऽध ये पार्थिवासः।
सत्रा वाजानामभवो विभक्ता यद् देवेषु धारयथा असुर्यम्।। ऋग्वेद VI.36.1

59. यदेजति पतति यच्च तिष्ठति प्राणत् अप्राणन्निमिषच्च यद्भुवत्।
तद्दाधार पृथिवीं विश्वरूपं तत् संभूय भवति एकमेव।। अथर्ववेद X.8.11

60. यस्य त्री पूर्णा मधुना पदानि अक्षीयमाणा स्वधया मदंति।
य उ त्रिधातु पृथिवीं उत द्यां एको दाधार भुवनानि विश्वा।। ऋग्वेद I.154.4

61. तदस्य प्रियमभि पाथो अश्याम् नरो यत्र देवयवो मदंति।
उरुक्रमस्य स हि बंधुरित्था विष्णोः पदे परमे मध्वः उत्सः।। ऋग्वेद I.154.5

62. यत्रा सुपर्णा अमृतस्य भक्षं अनिमेषं विदथाभिस्वरंति।
एना विश्वस्य भुवनस्य गोपाः स मा धीरः पाकमत्रा विवेश।। अथर्ववेद IX.9.22

63. देवो न यः सविता सत्यमन्मा क्रत्वा निपाति वृजनानि विश्वा।
पुरुप्रशस्तो अमतिर्न सत्यः आत्मेव शेवो दिधिषाय्यो भूत्।। ऋग्वेद I.73.2

64. अदब्ध इन्दो पवसे मदिन्तम आत्मेन्द्रस्य भवसि धासिरुत्तमः।
अभि स्वरन्ति बहवो मनीषिणो राजानमस्य भुवनस्य निंसते।। ऋग्वेद IX.85.3

65. आनंदा मोदाः प्रमुदः अभीमोदमुदश्च ये।
उच्छिष्टात् जज्ञिरे सर्वे दिवि देवा दिविश्रितः।। अथर्ववेद XI.7.26

66. नमः शंभवाय च मयोभवाय च नमः शंकराय च मयस्कराय च
नमः शिवाय च शिवतराय च।। यजुर्वेद XVI.41

67. उतेयं भूमिः वरुणस्य राज्ञ उतासौ द्यौः बृहती दूरे अंता।
उतो समुद्रौवरुणस्य कुक्षी उतास्मिन्नल्प उदके निलीनः।। अथर्ववेद IV.16.3

68. गर्भो यो अपां गर्भो वनानां गर्भश्च स्थातां गर्भश्चरथाम्।
अद्रौ चित् अस्मा अंतर् दुरोणे विशां न विश्वो अमृतः सुआधीः।। ऋग्वेद I.70.2

69. यो विद्यात् सूत्रं विततं यस्मिन्नोताः प्रजा इमाः।
सूत्रं सूत्रस्य यो विद्यात् स विद्यात् ब्राह्मणं महत्।।

वेदाहं सूत्रं विततं यस्मिन्नोताः प्रजा इमाः
सूत्रं सूत्रस्य अहं वेदाथो यद् ब्राह्मणं महत्।। अथर्ववेद X.8.37, 38

70. यो अग्नौ रुद्रो यो अप्स्वन्तर्य ओषधीर्वीरुध आविवेश।
य इमा विश्वा भुवनानि चाक्लृपे तस्मै रुद्राय नमो अस्त्वग्नये।। अथर्ववेद VII.87.1

71. अनड्वान्दाधार पृथिवीमुत द्यामनड्वान्दाधारोर्वन्तरिक्षम्।
अनड्वान्दाधार प्रदिशः षडुर्वीरनड्वान्विश्वं भुवनमा विवेश।। अथर्ववेद IV.11.1

72. वेनस्तत्पश्यत् निहितं गुहा सत् यत्र विश्वं भवति एकनीडम्।
तस्मिन् इदं सं च वि चैति सर्वं स ओतः प्रोतश्च विभूः प्रजासु। यजुर्वेद XXXII.8

73. अयं होता प्रथमः पश्यतेमम् इदं ज्योतिरमृतं मर्त्येषु।
अयं स जज्ञे ध्रुव आ निषत्तो ऽ मर्त्यस्तन्वा वर्धमानः।। ऋग्वेद VI.9.4

74. स वेद पुत्रः पितरं स मातरं स सूनुर्भुवत्स भुवत्पुनर्मघः।
स द्यामौर्णोदन्तरिक्षं स्वः स इदं विश्वमभवत्स आभवत्।। अथर्ववेद VII.1.2

75. त्वं अग्ने इंद्रो वृषभः सतामसि त्वं विष्णुः उरुगायो नमस्यः।
त्वं ब्रह्मा रयिविद् ब्रह्मणस्पते त्वं विधर्तः सचसे पुरंध्या।।
त्वं अग्ने राजा वरुणो धृतव्रतः त्वं मित्रो भवसि दस्म ईड्यः।
त्वं अर्यमा सत्पतिः यस्य संभुजं त्वं अंशो विदथे देव भाजयुः।
त्वं अग्ने त्वष्टा विधते सुवीर्यम् तव ग्नावो मित्रमहः सजात्यम्।
त्वं आशुहेमा ररिषे सुअश्व्यम् त्वं नरां शर्धो असि पुरूवसुः।।
ऋग्वेद II.1.3, 4, 5

76. पृच्छामि त्वा चितये देवसख यदि त्वमत्र मनसा जगन्थ।
येषु विष्णु स्त्रिषु पदेष्वेष्टस्तेषु विश्वं भुवनमा विवेशा।। यजुर्वेद XXIII.49

77. यत्रादित्याश्च रुद्राश्च वसवश्च समाहिताः।
भूतं च यत्र भव्यं च सर्वे लोकाः प्रतिष्ठिताः स्कम्भं तं ब्रूहि कतमः स्विदेव सः।
अथर्ववेद X.7.22

78. यद्द्याव इंद्र ते शतं शतं भूमीरुत स्युः।
न त्वा वज्रिन् त्सहस्रं सूर्या अनु न जातमष्ट रोदसी।। ऋग्वेद VIII.70.5

79. आ पप्रौ पार्थिवं रजो बद्बधे रोचना दिवि।
न त्वावाँ इन्द्र कश्चन न जातो न जनिष्यते ऽति विश्वं ववक्षिथ।। ऋग्वेद I.81.5

80. समेत विश्वे वचसा पतिं दिव एको विभूरतिथिर्जनानाम्।
स पूर्व्यो नूतनमा विवासत्तं वर्तनिरनु वावृत एकमित्पुरु।। अथर्ववेद VII.21.1

81. एक चक्रं वर्तत एकनेमि सहस्राक्षरं प्र पुरो नि पश्चा।
अर्धेन विश्वं भुवनं जजान यदस्यार्धं क्व तद्बभूव।। अथर्ववेद X.8.7

82. सहस्रशीर्षा पुरुषः सहस्राक्षः सहस्रपात्।
स भूमिं विश्वतो वृत्वा अत्यतिष्ठत् दशांगुलम्।। ऋग्वेद X.90.1

83. नहि वो अस्त्यर्भको देवासो न कुमारकः। विश्वे सतोमहान्त इत्।। ऋग्वेद VIII.30.1

84. ये देवासः दिवि एकादश स्थ पृथिव्यामध्येकादश स्थ।
अप्सुक्षितो महिनैकादश स्थ ते देवासो यज्ञमिमं जुषध्वम्।। ऋग्वेद I.139.11

85. यस्य त्रयस्त्रिंशत् देवा अंगे सर्वे समाहिताः।
स्कंभं तं ब्रूहि कतमः स्विदेव सः।।
यस्य त्रयस्त्रिंशत् देवा अंगे गात्रा विभेजिरे।
तान् वै त्रयस्त्रिंशत् देवान् एके ब्रह्मविदो विदुः।। अथर्ववेद X.7.13, 27

86. एक एवाग्निर्बहुधा समिद्ध एकः सूर्यो विश्वमनु प्रभूतः।
एकैवोषाः सर्वमिदं वि भाति एकं वा इदं वि बभूव सर्वम्।। ऋग्वेद VIII.58.2

87. तमिदं निगतं सहः स एष एक एकवृदेक एव।
य एतं देवमेकवृतं वेद।। अथर्ववेद XIII.4.12

88. त्रीणि शता त्री सहस्राणि अग्निं त्रिंशत् च देवा नव चासपर्यन्।
औक्षन् घृतैः अस्तृणन् बर्हिः अस्मा आत् इत् होतारं न्यसादयंत।। ऋग्वेद III.9.9

89. स वरुणः सायमग्निर्भवति स मित्रो भवति प्रातरुद्यन्।
स सविता भूत्वान्तरिक्षेण याति स इन्द्रो भूत्वा तपति मध्यतो दिवम्।।
तस्य देवस्य क्रुद्धस्यैतदागो य एवं विद्वासं ब्राह्मणं जिनाति।
उद्वेपय रोहित प्र क्षिणीहि ब्रह्मज्यस्य प्रति मुञ्च पाशान्।। अथर्ववेद XIII.3.13

90. तदेवाग्निः तदादित्यः तद्वायुः तदु चंद्रमाः।
तदेव शुक्रं तद् ब्रह्म ताः आपः स प्रजापतिः।। यजुर्वेद XXXII.1

91. रूपं रूपं प्रतिरूपो बभूव तदस्य रूपं प्रतिचक्षणाय।
इंद्रो मायाभिः पुरुरूप ईयते युक्ता हि अस्य हरयः शता दश।। ऋग्वेद VI.47.18

92. महद्यक्षं भुवनस्य मध्ये तपसि क्रांतं सलिलस्य पृष्ठे।
तस्मिन् श्रयंते य उ के च देवाः वृक्षस्य स्कंधः परित इव शाखाः।।
अथर्ववेद X.7.38

93. त्रिपादूर्ध्व उदैत्पुरुषः पादोऽस्येहाभवत् पुनः।
ततो विष्वङ् व्यक्रामत्साशनानशने अभि।। ऋग्वेद X.90.4

94. अतो देवा अवंतु नो यतो विष्णुर्विचक्रमे। पृथिव्याः सप्तं धामभिः।।
इदं विष्णुर्विचक्रमे त्रेधा नि दधे पदम्। स मुळ्हं अस्य पांसुरे।।
त्रीणि पदा वि चक्रमे विष्णुः गोपाः अदाभ्यः। अतो धर्माणि धारयन्।।
विष्णोः कर्माणि पश्यत यतः व्रतानि पस्पशे। इंद्रस्य युज्यः सखा।।
ऋग्वेद I.22.16-19

95. सम्राळन्यः स्वराळन्य उच्यते वां महांताविंद्रावरुणा महावसू।
विश्वे देवासः परमेव्योमनि सं वामोजो वृषणा सं बलं दधुः।। ऋग्वेद VII.82.2

96. इमामू ष्वासुरस्य श्रुतस्य महीं मायां वरुणस्य प्र वोचम्।
मानेनेव तस्थिवान् अंतरिक्षे वि यो ममे पृथिवीं सूर्येण।।

इमामू नु कवितमस्य मायां महीं देवस्य नकिरा दधर्ष।
एकं यदुद्ना न पृणंत्येनी रासिंचंती खनयः समुद्रम्।। ऋग्वेद V.85.5, 6

97. विश्वकर्मा विमना आद्विहाया धाता विधाता परमोत संदृक्।
तेषामिष्टानि समिषा मदन्ति यत्रा सप्तऋषीन् पर एकमाहुः।। ऋग्वेद X.82.2

98. यत्र ऋषयः प्रथमजा ऋचः साम यजुर्मही।
एकर्षिः यस्मिन् आर्पितः स्कंभं तं ब्रूहि कतमः स्विदेव सः।। अथर्ववेद X.7.14

99. अनंतं विततं पुरुत्रानंतमंतवच्चा समंते।
ते नाकपालश्चरति विचिन्वन् विद्वान् भूतमुतभव्यमस्य।। अथर्ववेद X.8.12

100. पूर्णात् पूर्णमुदचति पूर्ण पूर्णेन सिच्यते।
उतो तदद्य विद्याम यतस्तत् परिषिच्यते।। अथर्ववेद X.8.29

101. पुंडरीकं नवद्वारं त्रिभिर्गुणेभिरावृतम्।
तस्मिन् यद्यक्षं आत्मन्वत् तद्वै ब्रह्मविदो विदुः।।

अकामो धीरो अमृतः स्वयंभू रसेन तृप्तो न कुतश्चनोनः।
तमेव विद्वान् न बिभाय मृत्योः आत्मानं धीरं अजरं युवानम्।। अथर्ववेद X.8.43, 44

102. यदचरस्तन्वा वावृधानो बलानींद्र प्रब्रुवाणो जनेषु।
मायेत् सा ते यानि युद्धान्याहुः नाद्य शत्रुं ननु पुरा विवित्से।। ऋग्वेद X.54.2

103. इद्रं मित्रं, वरुणं, अग्निं आहुः अथो दिव्यः स सुपर्णो गरुत्मान्।
एकं सत् विप्रा बहुधा वदंति अग्निं यमं मातरिश्वानमाहुः।। ऋग्वेद I.164.46

104. ब्रह्मणस्पतिरेता सं कर्मार इवाधमत्।
देवानां पूर्व्ये युगेऽसतः सदजायत।। ऋग्वेद X.72.2

105. असत् च सच्च परमे व्योमन् दक्षस्य जन्मन् अदितेरुपस्थे।
अग्निर्ह नः प्रथमजा ऋतस्य पूर्व आयुनि वृषभश्च धेनुः।। ऋग्वेद X.5.7

106. नासदासीत् नो सदासीत्तदानीम् ऋग्वेद X.129.1

107. यो अस्याध्यक्षः परमे व्योमन्त्सो अंग वेद यदि वा न वेद ॥ ऋग्वेद X.129.7

CHAPTER IV

The Relation between God and Devotee

Rigorous theoretical considerations are often accompanied by compromises on the practical level. Gauḍapāda was an out-and-out non-dualist. He asserted the existence of Brahman and Brahman alone and refused to concede to the proposition that the world was ever created. Still he had to admit the existence of the world for all practical purposes. Similarly though the agnostic attitude shows the humility of the Vedic Ṛṣi, it can not satisfy an aspirant who wants a God with whom he can have personal relationship. Psychology of religion has never hesitated in giving an outright consent to a personal deity. A man of religion will not only posit such a deity, but will also attribute to it the best of everything. If there are beautiful things in the world, the real beauty will be found only in God. And as there are, in this world, persons who have imperfect knowledge, God is there to represent the stage of perfection. In this fashion, all superlatives come to be lodged in God. This idea of God resembles Plato's Idea of the Good, which is the source of all reality and power, and which serves as the *Summun Genus* to all ideas whatsoever. But there is an important difference. Plato's ideas, by their very nature form a hierarchy, and thus the lower ideas necessarily participate in the higher ones. The Vedic Ṛṣi, however, does not assert that there is such a continuous participation of men in God's being or in His knowledge or power or bliss. We shall consider Mantras which maintain that God represents the stage of perfection while man stands far away from knowledge, power, bliss and glory. They are concentrated in God; He is the source of all these. Therefore, the devotee implores God to grant him these gifts as a favour. He unhesitatingly approaches God and prays for the gifts which he is sure to get from the deity, who possesses all auspicious qualities in their fullness. Next, we shall note how the relation between God and the aspirant is that between a giver and a taker. God pours mercy

on man as it is His very nature to be kind. Both the devotee and the deity have longing for each other. We shall then study lyrics which tell that God has overflowing love for the worshipper and He removes difficulties in his way and grants pardon even when the devotee goes wrong. The devotee fondly looks on him as a parent or as a friend and expects boons from Him. But worldly goods do not satisfy him completely. In conclusion we shall see how the devotee asks for bliss and goes in submission to God.

1. God as a Source of Knowledge. God thus comes to be a source of knowledge, source of power or source of bliss. Knowledge makes all attainments easy. An ignorant man, therefore, feels at a loss and invokes the gentle care of the Aświns in whose kindness he believes. Ṛṣi Kakṣīvat Dairghatamasa Auśija asks: "Oh Aświns, what is it that can please you? How will both of you be gratified? And how can an ignorant man worship you?... He can only approach the Aświns for knowledge and his request will not go unheeded. We therefore evoke the all-knowing Aświns. Be pleased to teach us the proper prayer. I am offering you oblations" (S.1). Then there is a prayer to the Lord of speech. It is speech through which knowledge often finds expression. Thus speech becomes the revealer of knowledge and hence its importance. "Let us pray today to the Lord of speech, the creator, who is as swift as, if not swifter than, thought. May he be pleased by our offerings and grant us bliss" (S.2). God is looked upon as the fountain-head from which wisdom flows to human minds. Man therefore wants the Almighty to make him a possessor of that intellectual power. He appeals to a host of gods for sharp intellect. "May Varuṇa, Agni and Prajāpati send down to me rational powers. May Indra, Vāyu and Dhātā also join hands in doing so. Let them accept my libations" (S.3). We come to the next characteristic of God, that of omniscience. He is the all-knower. "By means of prayer, I harness to the chariot your pet horses that are very swift. Be seated in the comfortable chariot, Oh Indra, who are all-knowing and come to accept our offerings of Soma" (S.4). "You are the first born and omniscient; you possess the highest power. You guard our wealth" (S.5). This idea, it may be remarked, was later reflected in the Yoga–sūtra (I.26), where the Lord is said to be the teacher of the ancients (Pūrveṣām Guruḥ). An important aspect

of this omniscience is what Prof. R.D. Ranade calls the forefulfilment of a saint's desires, by God.[1] "When you please God by means of the Soma juice, he who knows the minds of all, fulfils their desires" (S.6). The Lord will not even let the devotee ask for any thing, or suffer any longing. Every thing goes a devotee's way before he dreams of it. His wishes are horses which he rides. There is, moreover, one point to be noted in this concept of forefulfilment. God might be fulfilling these desires because the saint has, in the first place, no bad or selfish desires, and in the second place his only desire is to attain to God. One more point is to be noted. A corollary, so to say, of omniscience is the unknowability of the omniscient being. Who can know the knower, the Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad (II.4.14) exclaimed later. "This Soma is active, is not caught by anyone's intellect, is conquerer of the worlds and creator of saplings. He is a Ṛṣi" (S.7).

Now, such omniscience would only be qualified omniscience or incomplete omniscience, if God is not conceived as creator as well, contends James Ward. "Our partial knowledge of a thing is knowledge of its utterances, attitudes and behaviour as they are for us: hence we call this relative knowledge. But a knowledge of all such characteristics of all things in all their interactions would still only be absolute as knowledge... it would leave the things themselves still independent as regards their existence..."[2] And therefore, "Such 'omniscience' in a word presupposes creation; thus it is only for creative intuition that the knowing and the being of objects could be said to be in any sense the same."[3] In other words, omniscience is omniscience only if it belongs to a creator God. Though the Vedic sages did not argue in this way, and though they did not unequivocally spell out all the characteristics of God, the idea of creation along with the idea of omniscience is found therein. "He bows to Bṛhaspati the patriarch, and knows him to be the creator,

1 Pathway to God in Hindi Literature, Adhyatma Vidya Mandir, Sangli, 1954, Pp 324–325

2 The Realm of Ends, Cambridge, At the University Press, 1912, P. 236

3 Ibid, P. 237

the all-knowing powerful God who can not be bound down by any one" (S.8). "With truth he shines in the upper direction, with knowledge he looks on the lower one, with vital airs he controls tangentially the place wherein the Brahman resides. He who knows the two friction-sticks (Araṇis) from whence the Vasu is created, alone knows the great Brahman" (S.9). In another ode we read a description of Agni who is ever alert among gods and is a creator of bodies (S.10). In other words, to know God is to know Him as a creator too. Then we find one very important verse counting a number of marks of deities. We are told that they are all-knowing and firm in moral laws; they are protectors from injury, leaders on the path and saviours from sin. "Whether it is Varuṇa, Mitra or Aryamā, they are all omniscient. The laws set by them are rigorously observed and they protect their devotees. They always follow the time-honoured truthful laws and are lovers of righteousness. They are leaders of the straight-forward way, are generous and are saviours of devotees from sin" (S.11). The happy expression Ṛta-spṛśāḥ makes it clear that they have the moral law in their grip and will not forsake it. One should not desert the principles which are acknowledged to be just, argued Socrates in the Dialogue, Crito. Of moral integrity the Ṛṣis have enough and to spare and that is why they become leaders. Another Mantra speaks of the same love for rectitude. "Oh delightful Soma, you are really divine. As a friend to friend, bestow righteousness on us" (S.12). "Ward off all fear of danger from me, Oh Varuṇa, the holy law-abiding sovereign, and bestow thy grace upon me. Release me from the meshes of the sin as a calf is released from the bonds of the tether. Without thee, I have absolutely no freedom even to open my own eyelids" (S.13). The twin qualities of possessing power, and abiding by principles, are mentioned here. For, persons in high places can not afford to preach a principle which they themselves do not follow. And who will abide by the laws if not the makers of laws or setters of standards? In fact, they have to take care of the laws all the more, because they are leaders whom the people follow. Rules are strengthened by pressing them into service. This is exemplified by the wise Socrates to whom we referred awhile ago, who, when entreated to leave his country and escape the death sentence,

pleaded: 'When rules are trampled under foot the day is not far off when states meet their doom'. So much for law-abidingness.

2. God as a Source of Power. The Mantra under consideration speaks of another quality, viz., the absolute power of God, and thus in the wake of omniscience comes omnipotence. If God is all-knowing, he is also all-powerful. "Worship Indra and sing his glorious deeds. Drops of Soma nectar have gladdened him. Prostrate before that supreme power with all humility", tells the sage Gotama Rāhūgaṇa (S.14). This power of the deity has the potency of bestowing immortality on the devotee. "Which deity should we worship? We should surrender to him who grants us vital force (Ātmadā), and vigour (Baladā), whose commands are observed by men and gods, resort to whose shadow brings on immortality and its deprivation, death" (S.15). By the twin methods of Anvaya (positive way), and Vyatireka (negative way), the same truth is stressed. If you take shelter under the shadow of blessings of the deity, you become immortal, whereas, if you cannot get there, you are subject to death. God's supremacy is sung in yet another poem. "It is God Indra without whose support man can never succeed, whom all contesting persons pray for help, who is the model for everything in the universe and who is the prime mover of all, including the unmoved also" (S.16). We do not find any subtle distinction between knowledge and power and many times they are found together. "Enhanced thousand times in strength by the power of intense devotion of the seers and saints, Indra has become as vast as the ocean. He is truth incarnate" (S.17). Indra is elsewhere depicted as dispelling illusion by slaying the mighty guileful being (मायिनं मृगं अवधीः) with his mysterious power (Māyā). His power is unsurpassable and on him gods have bestowed strength, power and insight too. By all these glories he reveals his suzerainty (S.18).

Psychology has long discovered that all types of eminence — physical, intellectual, educational or social — contribute to leadership qualities in a person. These excellences enhance his image and he automatically controls the masses. This is pictured in a number of Mantras. Indra has been acclaimed as the supreme master. "You are the sole ruler over the mortals", declares one poem (S.19); while

another hymn attributes to him other qualities as well. "You are the bravest of all; your devotees sing your praises. Master of manifold wondrous power, Indra comes to reveal his prowess. Salutations to him. Since bygone days, he alone has reigned over the creation" (S.20). The eminence of the Lord is supreme and what he wills shall certainly come to pass. None can obstruct its course (S.21). The thought finds an echo in what the saint of Nimbargi used to say: "Everything rests in God's hands; nothing can come to pass unless He wills it". This brings us on the brink of determinism. There's a destiny, said Shakespeare, in the fall of a sparrow. In such a world of cast-iron-necessity, man becomes just a puppet. The conductor of the puppet-show is hidden from us, but he controls every thing and the puppets dance because He makes them to. Here man's freedom comes to naught. Students of moral philosophy know the anomaly of such a situation. There cannot be moral responsibility unless man is free. But this freedom does not seem to have been granted to man by these Mantras. In many a verse the lordly power is said to be a result of penance. "Oh Indra," goes one utterance, "this Soma is meant for you, you are its enjoyer. Bestow progeny on us. You have won heavens on the strength of your penance" (S.22). The Kauṣītakī Upaniṣad adds an explanatory note: "Till such time as Indra did not have mystical knowledge, he was defeated by the Asuras. But when he attained to mystical knowledge, he killed them and became a Lord of the kingdom of the gods" (IV.20).

We again read that only the wise can attain to the highest; those that are incapable of cultivating knowledge, fall down (S.23). Then we come across a hymn which combines omniscience and omnipotence. "Indra can not be defeated by any one. No power can envelop him. He can listen to the prayer of the world and he sees the whole of it" (S.24). Thus power is traced back to knowledge or penance. Not only are omniscience and omnipotence found together, but the latter can also be said to be a derivative of the former. Knowledge, they say, is power, and rightly so. But William James, the apostle of human freedom, will have none of this. For him, denying freedom to man is sacrilege, and therefore in championing human freedom he has not hesitated to deny to God the distinction of omniscience. His oft-quoted example of the game of chess where

an expert is playing with a novice, makes this clear. The expert does not have any knowledge of the move the novice may make; but he has the power to counteract any possible move of the novice and consequently he is always the winner. So too God does not have knowledge of actions of human beings. By saying this, James preserves man's freedom to act on his own. For, if God foreknows man's actions, the actions can not be said to be a result of man's free choice. Of course, this freedom does not help a man, for God has the power to nullify all his actions and win ultimate victory. Whatever the result, man is free to make his choice. To safeguard man's freedom, James is prepared to surrender God's omniscience and make Him only omnipotent.

3. God as a Source of Bliss. We next come to a group of verses which point to God as the source of bliss. We find three types of approaches in these Mantras. In the first place, the sage offers oblations and asks bliss in return. Secondly, he offers prayers and invokes His grace. Thirdly the Ṛṣi confidently exclaims that it is the nature of God to shower bliss, and man need not move him to do so. These may be said to constitute three stages. At the first stage, we come across an attitude of some sort of barter, men offering libations and asking for felicity in return. "As a warrior runs his chariot with great speed, so are we driving ourselves hard for your sake. Pour your grace on us. We sing your praises and meditate on you for the sake of spiritual pleasure" (S.25). And Ṛṣi Gṛtsamada says: "he who with intense faith in his heart, offers gifts to Brahmaṇaspati, the father of gods and worships him, enjoys strength and wealth along with his kith and kin, friends, sons and warriors" (S.26). We find some Mantras which exemplify the second type of attitude, that of expecting grace just for asking. This marks an advance over the first stage in that the devotee is conscious that there can not be an exchange between his offerings and God's endowments. After all, when every thing belongs to God, where does man have any authority to offer Him even a blade of grass? So he just prays for delight. "Quelling the irreligious enemies and leaving behind miseries we meditate upon Soma who is the bund (Setu) leading to auspiciousness" (S.27). Soma on whom the devotee is contemplating, is called Setu or bridge. The word Setu is very

important, for it initiates an idea used many times over. In Muṇḍaka II.2.5, we are asked to know the self and leave all other talk because that alone constitutes the bridge to immortality (तमेवैकं जानथ आत्मानमन्या वाचो विमुंचथ अमृतस्यैष सेतुः). The self is called a bridge, for it is used as a means to cross over from miseries to everlasting glory. We shall deal with the idea of Setu towards the end of this chapter where it is used in a more comprehensive sense. Joy is sought from all quarters by the Vedic sage. 'Pray to one, pray to all' is his method. Another Ṛk supports this. "Your path is easy (Suga), thornless (Anṛkṣara), and perfect (Sādhu). Oh Aryaman, Mitra and Varuṇa, lead us along the way, so that with your guidance we shall attain to ever-fresh happiness" (S.28). "Oh Soma, we humbly pray for indestructible wealth and illuminating knowledge. Such a state is desired by all, for it possessess protective power" (S.29). There is a prayer for blessedness from the highest God who is looked upon as the father and mother. He is full of bliss, the source of bliss and therefore can confer bliss. "Oh Almighty, you are our father and mother; we pray for beatitude" (S.30). There is the third and highest way of approach to the Lord, who is considered as bliss overflowing. It is superfluous to ask for happiness because it is the essence of God to give. He is a spring of joy and one need not pray to him for a drop. "Indra is by disposition magnanimous and full of energy and cheer. He is lustrous, laudable and cherishes a liking for Soma" (S.31). "You are wise and illuminator of our intellects. You are the bestower of bliss. Those who reflect on you, crave for you; you are the highest among those who endow perfection" (S.32).

4. God as a Source of Glory. God, the source of knowledge, source of power and source of bliss, is now portrayed as source of glory. A popular verse from विष्णुपुराण (VI.5.74), enumerates the different excellences of God, thus:

ऐश्वर्यस्य समग्रस्य वीर्यस्य यशसः श्रियः।
ज्ञानवैराग्ययोश्चैव षण्णां भग इतीरणा ॥

(Splendour, power, fame, royalty, knowledge and dispassion constitute the six-fold glory of God). Knowledge (Jñāna), power (Vīrya), have already been noticed. We come across other Mantras

where royalty (Śrī), wealth (Vasu) and success (Yaśas) are said to be His properties. With Ānanda or the highest bliss added, the Lord becomes most glorious, Bhagavān or illustrious. The Almighty, however, does not merely possess excellence, He radiates it. "Let Indra impart to us that instruction by which we shall attain to a high rank. He loves his devotees and nourishes them; let him distribute his wealth amongst us" (S.33). "For spiritual status (Śrī) is He (Soma) engendered; from majesty he comes forth; He bestows nobility and material prosperity on His devotees; clothed with that dignity, His devotees attained immortality and sheerly on account of His assistance they are crowned with success in all conflicts of life", asserts Ṛṣi Kaṇva Ghaura (S.34). These verses are addressed to Soma, Agni and Indra alike. Here is one song which mentions super-human qualities in Indra. "For glory (Śrī) the devotee takes recourse to thy feet. You, bold and thunder-armed one, are the mighty gracious donor. Clad in vesture, fragrant and beautiful to look on, you appear like a rolling sun with graceful movements" (S.35). In another place Prajāpati is invoked to shower all sorts of grandeur on the devotee. "Let Prajāpati, the sovereign, enrich me with ever-growing vigour (Varcas), success (Yaśas) and ambrosial juice (Yajñasya Payas) like heavenly splendour" (S.36). By far the clearest mention of riches (both this-worldly happiness and other-worldly felicity) occurs in Ṛgveda. "Oh Indra, may your great powers help us in achieving wealth. You are a ruler of both types of glories (Ubhaya). Make us the recipients of the great and matchless Ratna or the jewel of spiritual experience" (S.37).

5. God as Merciful. It is interesting to note that in the aforesaid verse describing God's illustrious qualities, we find a parallel in Jñāneśwara who substitutes Vīrya (power) by Audārya (generosity). We shall presently note a few hymns which depict a compassionate and generous nature of God. "Let us live in the merciful mind of that praise-worthy Lord. Let us carry ourselves in the manner which will delight him. He is powerful and protects all. Let him finish our enemies who hate us," prays the sage Garga Bhāradvāja (S.38). "We come to you by the highway of meditation, Oh mighty Indra, make us successful along with our horses" (S.39). It is Indra and Indra alone who is approached by the devotee. Such one-pointed devotion

should yield its fruit in the form of God's mercy. "Oh you performer of hundred sacrifices, I never asked any one else's favour. I am coming to you alone; please therefore be tender to me" (S.40). "With your sheltering power, you become an auspicious king of your devotees. Oh Indra, please, therefore be very soft-hearted" (S.41). For the Ṛṣis, the real nourishment comes not from the mother, but from the mother-goddess, Saraswatī. They want her to nurse them and they also want other gods to take them under the wings and watch over them. "Oh Saraswatī, you have given feed to all great men. Your strength is unfathomable; open your breast for us to partake of the freely provided health-bestowing and wealth-giving treasures" (S.42). "As birds spread their wings, spread your merciful cover and provide us with every sort of security. Once we get your love, we get every thing" (S.43). God's mercy takes various forms — removing obstructions from the path of the devotee, healing the sick, covering the naked and taking the whole responsibility of an aspirant's well-being. "Shorten our ways, Oh Pūṣan, remove obstruction on the path; go close before us, cloud-born God. Drive from our road, the wolf, the wicked inauspicious wolf, who lies in wait to pounce on us. Wise Pūṣan, wonder-worker, we now claim of thee the aid, wherewith you helped our sires of old" (S.44). Every traveller wants to reach his destination by a shortcut which is at the same time free from all dangers. And hence such a request. Further we read: "He covers that which is bare; he gives medicines to those who are sick. Through his grace the blind can see and the lame can move about" (S.45). Such a One bears the burden of his devotees on his lone shoulders. "He boosts up the morale of those that are engaged in war. Man looks upon Him alone as benefactor. He is the sole commander of the service squad. Let that Indra, surrounded by Maruts, be our refuge" (S.46). God in his extreme kindness not only benefits the devotees but also sanctifies the sinners. "Let us remain under the safe-keeping of Varuṇa, who confers His grace even upon sinners and makes them happy. Let us observe His rules and regulations (Vratāni) strictly, and be taintless. Oh God, guard us for ever with your benign ways. Your grace confers supersensuous experiences and ecstatic joy on the devotees" (S.47). Happiness consists in the experience of God. There is

mention of the experience of the ambrosial juice. That oozing of spiritual nectar blesses the man and keeps his mind pinned down to it. "Oh Soma, you trickle down from all sides for the sake of Indra, in order to impart exhileration and delight to him. You are the heart of the devotee and controller of his mind as well" (S.48).

6. God's Longing for the Devotee. If the devotee has an intense longing for God, God has an equally intense love for the devotee. "What new and new eclogues can be sung by a mortal like me? Have not the ancient devotees attained to enlightenment by singing the time-honoured praise-songs?" Ṛṣi Medhyātithi Kāṇva asks (S.49). "May the God Savitṛ, the lord of creative energy, highly adored by sages be charitable to us who are desirous of divine glory, prayerful devotion and versatile intellect. In the midst of the good and plenty, we pray that we may be worthy recipients of the benign affection of God Savitṛ" (S.50). The devotee asks for the grace of God, no doubt; for that he, on his part, remains glued to His name and surrenders to Him with all that he has. "Prompted by their intellects, the wise surrender to God meditating on Him and lauding His exploits" (S.51). "Only those can enter your territory, Oh Mitra and Varuṇa, who go in submission to you with all their intellect. Api's sons who gave up meditation remained outside" (S.52). The Ṛk gives an impression that there is a reciprocal relation between surrender and grace, and seeks to establish it by means of positive and negative instances. Those who submit to God, reach His abode, and those who do not, are barred an entry!

Nārada says that a devotee feels extreme pain when separated from God; yes, but God more than reciprocates the feeling. He becomes restless. He tries to be in the vicinity of his devotees and attracts their attention. "The brave Indra is for ever near you. He tries to induce you to perform a sacrifice. He is in the midst of you and surrounds you" (S.53). How wonderful must be the experience of feeling God as surrounding the aspirant. King Parīkṣit, still unborn, is said to have had such an experience of God. Shri Amburao Maharaj, a saint from Karnatak, used to say "God is present every where. He is ever near you. But it is your greatest misfortune that you do not find time to see Him". Another Mantra

goes one step ahead and says that He is always eager to open his coffers for you. "Praise that immaculate Indra whose gifts are purifying. He who follows Him always gets riches from Him. He is ever eager to satisfy the desires of aspirants" (S.54). As God is present every where, it is no wonder that He manifests himself then and there. "Any man from any of the five tribes whose ardent prayers are passionately addressed to Indra, receives instant attention. The evil forces are warded off. God thus becomes a worthy object of devotion" (S.55). "Lord Indra reveals Himself to his devotee who worships Him with great application of mind and presents to him Soma libations profusely, in the manner of a rich man offering his abundant wealth. The gracious Lord extends his helping hand and saves His devotee by lifting him up, but slays without intimation those who hate the Divine" (S.56). It was exactly in this sense that the Saint of Umadi uttered, "Holding them by the neck I uplift them whom I have initiated". The great God is immeasurable, but the devotee can still measure him by his one-pointed devotion. By that intense feeling, He can be made to appear before the devotee (S.57). A lyric of Muni Pūraṇa Vaiśvāmitra says that God is bound to the devotee by strong cords and therefore the aspirant can always count on His unfailing support. "When a seeker after divinity has his mind firmly fixed on God with whole-hearted devotion and offers Soma, God does not leave him or his cattle exposed, but favours him with all auspiciousness" (S.58).

The give-and-take activity which we find in worldly life finds the receiver enthusiastic, while the giver is rather chary. In the relationship between God and devotee it is different. The devotee is eager to receive no doubt, but God is equally eager to give. In a bunch of songs we get different aspects of God's love for the saint. "The merciful God rushes through the region like a valiant bull in order to help His devotees. The bountiful Lord shows the divine light to the man who gives Soma oblations with intense devotion" (S.59). Another important point is made by the Vedic seers, when they say that God has all willingness to give, but He will not favour a man who is idle. So alertness is a condition by which gods are pleased. "Gods love the man who toils to offer Soma juice to them. They do not like one who sleeps in idleness; themselves being always active,

they punish those who commit blunders" (S.60). There is an assurance from the sage Kāśyapa Avatsāra: "The Ṛks will be indulgent to him who is awake. Sāmasūktas will go to him who is alert. Soma says to the wide awake, ' I am yours, I have established myself in your friendship'. Ṛks love Agni (or whoever performs his duty of meditation on God), because he is awake. Sāmasūktas go to him for he is alert. Soma says to him 'I shall enjoy your friendship. I have made your place my home'" (S.61). Similar is the import of another Mantra. "The devotee has always got to be vigilant; the wise and ever-diligent worshippers are blessed with the vision of the supreme form of the Lord (Parama-pada), i.e. they attain to that blissful state on which they meditate unrestingly" (S.62). We are given to know that God never forgets the devotion of the aspirants. "Meditate on Indra, Oh Adhvaryus, till He is pleased; He is full of grace just as the udders of the cow are filled with milk for her calf. I know, nay, I am convinced that Indra will never forget him who has contemplated on him" (S.63). We find two verses which assert for certain that God, being fond of a worshipper, hears the worshipper's call even from afar. "Revealing his divine power and manifesting different ways of helping a devotee, Lord Indra will rush to us trailing on our call, when He hears it" (S.64). "Let us get ready for meditation and utter the Mantra of Agni. It will reach his ear though he may be far away" (S.65). There is a very re-assuring Mantra which encourages the aspirant to continue his meditation, by informing him, that all those who have gone by this path, have attained to the goal. "I shall ever sing the praises of that great God who is sitting on the sacred grass, who has turned his gracious face towards me, who is valiant and all-comprehensive, and thus gets my desires fulfilled. This is the path trodden by all the ancient ones (Pratnathā), our forefathers of olden times (Pūrvathā), worshippers of today (Imathā), in fact by devotees every where (Viśvathā)" (S.66).

7. God removes an Aspirant's Difficulties. There is a set of Vedic utterances laden with a hopeful message that God makes smooth the path of the devotee and sweeps it clean of dangerous spots. This gives tremendous confidence and security to the traveller beginning his spiritual journey. It redoubles his energy and enthu-

siasm. "Indra, you never hold back your gifts, never do you forsake your devotees. And now your grace is being poured on us more and more liberally" (S.67). "All kinds of powers are concentrated in you, Oh Indra. You are ever eager to partake of Soma. Every one is aware of the potency of Vajra which you are wearing on your arm. Do kill our enemies. Vamra's enemy had achieved tremendous strength, so that he was on the outskirts of heaven. But as Vamra meditated on you, you enabled him to conquer his enemy" (S.68). Indra who destroys the enemies of his devotees verily becomes their refuge. "Indra who is the leader of the brave (Satpati) and who fulfils their desires (Carṣaṇiprāḥ) fought a great war to provide a shelter to the gods. His exploits are sung by the wise in the house of the illuminating sun i.e. they continue meditation while yet enjoying the experience of God's lustrous form" (S.69). No wonder that man wishes to have more and more of His grace. "Oh Mitra, son of Aditi, let him acquire riches who abides by your laws. He, who is your ward, is not conquered or killed. Sorrow ventures not to touch him or even enter into his vicinity. We are free from disease. Absorbed in your praises, we kneel before you and worship you. Let us be recipients of your benediction. Here comes Mitra, honourable, strong and wise. Let us be covered by his tenderness and protective power" (S.70). This saving armour of God is especially sought by the devotee when he is facing hardships. It is a universal truth that man prays to God only when in distress. That is why Kuntī, the mother of Pāṇḍavas, wished to be visited by perplexities so that, at least then, she would remember God. The soft-hearted Lord can not stand his devotee's suffering and runs to him. "Sing the glories of Indra and Varuṇa with all your heart, with enthusiasm, with mirth and salute them. One of them the brave Indra, kills Vṛtra (removes your obstacles) and the other, the wise Varuṇa, comes to you when you are passing through hard times" (S.71). Whatever may be the circumstances one is placed in, one should always remember Him. So much is the potential power of God's words, that when he utters anything, it must come true. His words are expressions of truth; how can they go wrong? His desires come true (Satyakāma), His resolutions come true (Satya-samkalpa), says the Upaniṣad (Chāndogya VIII.7.1). On the same analogy we may say that He is Satyavāk, his words come

true. "It is sufficient for me if you merely say that I, your devotee, will not be destroyed. For, your words express nothing but truth" is the observation of the sage Sukakṣa Āngirasa (S.72). After all, truth is an aspect of divinity and rigorous practice of truth contains a divine element. It is in this strain that the Saint of Nimbargi used to say, that one's words will never be falsified if one unfailingly utters truth and nothing but truth.

The idea of man's gaining freedom from enemies or vices as a result of God's grace is set forth in a couple of Mantras. The first speaks of the experience of form and the other two of the experience of flavour. "In the vicinity of the heavens appear the birds with beautiful wings. They drive away the wolves which try to swim across the expanse of waters. Oh Lord, let my prayers be remembered" (S.73). "Indra slew Vṛtra by the power he gained from Soma. He will repeat the same in future" (S.74). "Under the ecstatic influence of Soma draught, Indra completely destroys the evil forces encircling his devotees and bestows upon them the satisfaction of plenitude" (S.75). Needless to say the birds with beautiful wings stand for the experience of the form of God and Soma for that of the ambrosial juice. It is these that confer a sense of fulfilment or beatific joy on a devotee.

8. God as Benefactor. Plato contrasted the non-rational part of the soul with the rational and stated that the non-rational part with its two divisions, appetite and spirited element, always tries to pull man downwards. If the rational element is not sufficiently powerful, man will commit errors. When the better part of man becomes aware of such mistakes, it wants to make atonements. It repents, wishes to be forgiven and resolves to bend its way towards good. Such requests for forgiveness are contained in many Vedic Mantras. "Your devotee who abides by your eternal moral law, Ṛta, sings Sāma songs for you. You are pure, purifier and accomplish great tasks" (S.76). It is presupposed that God being himself an exemplar of purity or purity in excess, can burn off the sins of devotees. Thus Ṛṣi Tiraścī Āngirasa prays: "Let us glorify the immaculate Indra by sacred Sāma hymns. His lustre and glory are enhanced by the faultless repetition of his praise-songs. Let the

spotless Indra, who always blesses his devotees, be pleased. Verily, oh Indra, you are clean and guileless and hence naturally you confer upon your devotees felicity and spiritual wealth. Being unsullied you are able to completely exterminate the surrounding forces of evil. Perfect that you are, you equip your devotees with strength" (S.77). There is an idea which talks of god as a bridge — which stems the flow of sins or passions. "You two are holders of several nooses, oh Mitra and Varuṇa, you are the bridge against irreligious nature and invincible to hostile mortals. Pray, may we cross over all dangers by following your path of eternal truth, Ṛta, as those crossing over water by having resort to a boat" (S.78). There are several prayers for support from God. They are usually prefaced by a laudatory invocation. They first praise the gods and then surreptitiously untie the bundle of their demands. "Mitra guides even those who are full of sins and wishes them well who commit faults. Let us be under his shelter. Like children of Varuṇa, we take resort to your benign nature" (S.79). As already seen, wrong doings just flow from a man who has not learnt to channelise his energies towards moral ends. Nevertheless he wishes to be forgiven for his derelictions. Ṛṣi Brahmā makes an ardent appeal: "As a creature is freed from the bonds, as the body is wiped clean of dirt as a result of a bath, as butter becomes clarified and sacred after heating it, let us be absolved of our failings and their evil effects" (S.80). "You pardon the foibles committed against gods, the indiscretions against men, the obliquities against fathers, the lapses against oneself, as also misconducts of all sorts. You forgive the wrong-doings performed knowingly or unknowingly" (S.81). Cleansing off imperfections is but a negative fruit; a devotee also reaps a positive one. Thus along with the loosening the shackles of misdemeanour the devotee gains supersensuous experiences. "Oh God, along with emancipation from sins we gain a taintless spiritual jewel. May the flawless Ādityas be kind to us" (S.82). This generates tremendous self-confidence and a healthy feeling of happiness in an aspirant. "After extracting Soma juice we befriend Indra. We no longer look on ourselves as sinners, as poverty-ridden or as unbelievers" (S.83).

We shall now consider a group of verses where the worshipper looks upon himself as a child and upon God as a mother or father.

"You are a treasure-house of glories or glory itself. Oh Agni, your greatness lies in your splendour. Let us participate in your fond love" (S.84). "To me, Oh Indra, you are more precious than my father or my brother... You, giver of shelter, are equal to my mother. Oh good Lord, cover me with lavish bounties" (S.85). The aspirant's one desire is always to get the vision of God. Let us see a couple of Mantras which contain prayers for God's vision, for a proper direction to the intellect, for happiness, for knowledge and for spiritual wealth. "Reveal thyself to me, Oh Indra. You are our kin; you are our saviour. Give us happiness. Be a friend, protector and kindest father. Give us vitality" (S.86). "You have always been glorified here. You have heard the praise of ancient Ṛṣis. Pray, direct my intellect in the proper way" (S.87). A child has no inhibition in asking any thing of a parent. With this attitude the aspirant sings: "Oh you Lord of riches, you are our father. You are our mother too. That is why I approach you for granting me bliss" (S.88). "Pray, give us wisdom or enlightenment (Kratu), Oh Indra, as a father, to his sons. Guide us, Oh much-invoked on the divine path, so that we, the struggling souls, may secure the divine light during this very life" (S.89). Undoubtedly the desire is to gain the highest knowledge while still living. The Vedic seers will not postpone anything to hereafter. 'Here and now' is the watchword of their philosophy of life. That explains their desire for getting the requests granted not at a later date but at the earliest moment. " I ask of you only this much. Enrich your devotee, wherever he is, with spiritual wealth every day (दिवे दिवे). Who else is our champion, Oh Indra? Who is our friend or refuge? Who is our guardian and father?"(S.90).

Of all the nine kinds of Bhakti, the Sakhya-bhakti has its own charm, because the devotee treats God as on a par with himself. For once, the devotee loves to dream that God is his friend, infinitely superior though He may be. Such intimacy exudes an aroma of nearness and dearness to God. "You destroyed Vala who had a greed for power, at the hands of Angirasas who were chanting 'May the link of our ancient brotherhood be preserved'. You then opened the gates of Vala's capital city for all" (S.91). "Offer prayers to God Indra who is crowned as the sovereign ruler, who is all-seeing and

all-powerful. Indra is a friend, philosopher and guide to devotees" (S.92). Ārya Cāṇakya says that it is advantageous to have a friend who is wealthy and powerful. At the same time he must have a genuine love for his peer. The Ṛṣis have found an ideal friend in God. "I Śasa, am singing your praises. Your powers are so fabulous that no one who befriends you can be killed or even conquered" (S.93). The intensity of your affection is beyond measure. Sweet is your friendship and sweeter your guidance. We need only meditate on you" (S.94). Prayers addressed to Almighty are an everyday phenomenon. Not so common is the assurance which comes from God. But the Vedic Ṛṣi on the strength of earnestness and sincerity of his devotion, gets surety from God. This is again an indication of his tireless efforts to win what he wants. Here is an example: "May your praise-songs spread among all men in all quarters. Pray, favour me with a gift which has been denied to me up till now (देहि नु मे यन्मे अदत्तः). You are my intimate friend who walked seven solemn steps with me (मे सप्तपदः सखासि)" (S.95). And pat comes the reply: "We are indeed friends and our births have taken place at the same time. I shall give you what has been denied to you up till now (ददामि तत् यत्ते अदत्तः), I am your intimate friend who walked seven solemn steps with you (ते सप्तपदः सखास्मि)" (S.96).

9. God as the Ultimate Refuge. To such an all-powerful and beneficent deity, what can a poor creature like man offer in return? Nor does God exchange gifts for a pittance. The only thing man can volunteer to invest is his loyalty. He can sing in honour of the deity with heart-felt gratitude "Those who have locked you up in their hearts are the real sages", declares one psalm (S.97). For an ardent aspirant there is none who is wiser than God and none who is a real patron like Him. "You are indeed matchless. Who can be your equal in knowledge? There never was and there never will be a compeer for you. Take up then, the tasks which you said you would" (S.98). "We have come to your door, for you are a liberal donor. Oh bountiful Indra, do not withhold your charities. Besides you we have no ally amongst the defenders of mortals to whom we may look for support. Have you not been described as a fulfiller of men's desires?" (S.99).

Being sure of God's generosities, devotees feel free to ask for boons. The sage Kali Prāgātha observes: "Truly we are yours, Oh Lord. We worshippers depend solely on you. There is none, Oh much invoked one, except you who can show us grace. Pray, deliver us from this miserable, famished and accursed state of life and extend your help and guidance with your wonderfully versatile intelligence, Oh mighty leader" (S.100). A steadfast admirer always looks upon God as the only being who combines every thing that is best. "I revere you as the holiest of the holy; I regard you as the shaker of the unshakable; I deem you as the banner of the heroes, Oh Indra, I respect you as the foremost of all men" (S.101). God is again the bestower of fortune and of peace. "May our lot prosper by your love, lead us to the pinnacle of success. You alone are the protector, Oh God. You have hundreds and thousands of medicines. May your grace be on us. Remove the goddess of ill-luck (Nirṛti) from near us and cleanse our sins. With this fond hope in my mind I am appealing to you and meditating on you. Be pleased with us and let not our lives be cut short" (S.102). Madhva, in his Ṛgbhāṣya, understands Bhiṣaja as instruments for the preservation of the world. God has not only innumerable aids but also aids of different types (जगद्रक्षा साधनानि अपि अनन्तानि अनन्तधा सन्ति). Here the protection sought for is from man's own evil tendencies (निर्ऋत्याख्या दुर्मति) and the prayer is for a mind which will rest in God (मतिर्मम त्वद्विषये सदा अस्तु). Thus Madhva's interpretation points out a psycho-ethical truth that our real disease is keeping away from God and the cure lies in harnessing our mind to the feet of the highest Lord who is the possessor of all fortunes (ऐश्वर्यादि गुणाः यस्य). From another Mantra we learn that from God alone does peace flow. "You are verily the greatest, but you have made the mortals also great. I give my word that none other than you can grant peace" (S.103).

As the source of knowledge, power, glory or bliss, as full of mercy for a devotee, as a friend of the good and destroyer of the wicked or as sanctifier or father, God remains the only refuge for man. "My wishes and my thoughts long to be absorbed in God. My feelings run to him. There is absolutely no other comforter than He.

My aspirations are fixed on Him" (S.104). "I will win the favour of God Rudra by means of invocations and offerings of oblations. He is mellow-hearted and readily responds to the call of his devotees. I believe that he will not allow me to fall a prey to luring temptations. I invoke the powerful god Rudra along with the Maruts for His geniality and I pray for the refuge at His feet just as a man who is tortured by blazing heat of the sun craves for the relieving shelter of a shady tree" (S.105). When a man's mind thirsts for God, He comes to soothe him as cool water. "As one offers water to the thirsty, you comforted the needy who sang your gracious ways. We are now praying for energy as well as long life" (S.106). Men with a devout mind perform sacrifices by which Indra is propitiated; but those with a crooked mind, seem to wander far away from Indra. To the devout, Indra is like a lake to a thirsty man; but to the insincere men, he happens to be like a journey on a long tiresome road (S.107). "May Bṛhaspati, the teacher of gods, remove dullness in my vision, take away sorrow and wipe out suffering from my mind and heart. May he be propitious to me" (S.108). "Pray, grant us an impregnable refuge (अच्छिद्रं शर्म), Oh guileless and merciful gods, so that none can smite off that defending armour from afar or from near" prays Manu Vaivasvata (S.109).

The devotee puts utmost confidence in God and rests assured that He and He alone will come to his succour. Afflicted with various miseries and unable to help himself, man rushes to God for help. Tradition speaks of three kinds of distresses — physical, cosmical and mental; but there are innumerable varieties of each kind of affliction, so that an individual's sorrows are countless. God cures them all. He becomes water to the thirsty, food to the hungry, warm sunshine to the shivering and cool wind to him who is oppressed by heat. In fact He is a panacea for all worldly woes. The whole world may fail a man but never the Almighty. Friends may prove unkind but there always remains for man one ultimate refuge, God. All kinds of powers can be deflated but God's support to the devotee stands firm and unshakable. Without that backing, the world is a nasty, fearsome place of trial. With God as an ally, it becomes a blissful existence.

SOURCES-IV

1. का राधद्धोत्रा अश्विना वां को वां जोष उभयोः। कथा विधात्यप्रचेताः।।
विद्वांसाविद् दुरः पृच्छेदविद्वानित्थापरो अचेताः। नू चिन्नु मर्ते अक्रौ।।
ता विद्वांसा हवामहे वां ता नो विद्वांसा मन्म वोचेतमद्य। प्रार्चद् दयमानो युवाकुः।।
ऋग्वेद I.120.1, 2, 3

2. वाचस्पतिं विश्वकर्माणमूतये मनोजुवं वाजे अद्या हुवेम।
स नो विश्वानि हवनानि जोषत् विश्वशंभूरवसे साधुकर्मा।। ऋग्वेद X.81.7

3. मेधां मे वरुणो ददातु मेधामग्निः प्रजापतिः।
मेधामिन्द्रश्च वायुश्च मेधां धाता ददातु मे स्वाहा।। यजुर्वेद XXXII.15

4. ब्रह्मणा ते ब्रह्मयुजा युनज्मि हरी सखाया सधमाद आशू।
स्थिरं रथं सुखं इंद्राधितिष्ठन् प्रजानन् विद्वान् उप याहि सोमम्।। ऋग्वेद III.35.4

5. ऋषिर्हि पूर्वजा अस्येक ईशान ओजसा। इंद्र चोष्कूयसे वसु।। ऋग्वेद VIII.6.41

6. यदी सुतेभिरिन्दुभिः सोमेभिः प्रतिभूषथ।
वेदा विश्वस्य मेधिरो धृषत् तंतमिदेषते।। ऋग्वेद VI.42.3

7. अयं कृत्नुः अगृभीतो विश्वजित् उद्भिदित् सोमः। ऋषिर्विप्रः काव्येन।। ऋग्वेद VIII.79.1

8. योऽथर्वाणं पितरं देवबंधुं बृहस्पतिं नमसाव च गच्छात्।
त्वं विश्वेषां जनिता यथासः कविर्देवो न दभायत् स्वधावान्।। अथर्ववेद IV.1.7

9. सत्येनोर्ध्वस्तपति ब्रह्मणार्वाङ् वि पश्यति।
प्राणेन तिर्यङ् प्राणति यस्मिन् ज्येष्ठमधि श्रितम्।।
यो वै ते विद्यादरणी याभ्यां निर्मथ्यते वसु।
स विद्वान् ज्येष्ठं मन्येत स विद्यात् ब्राह्मणं महत्।। अथर्ववेद X.8.19, 20

10. त्वं नो अग्ने पित्रोरुपस्थ आ देवो देवेषु अनवद्य जागृविः।
तनूकृत् बोधि प्रमतिश्च कारवे त्वं कल्याण वसु विश्वं ओपिषे।। ऋग्वेद I.31.9

11. विश्वे हि विश्ववेदसो वरुणो मित्रो अर्यमा।
व्रता पदेव सश्चिरे पांति मर्त्यं रिषः।।
ते हि सत्या ऋतस्पृशः ऋतावानो जनेजने।
सुनीथासः सुदानवः अंहोश्चित् उरु च क्रयः।। ऋग्वेद V.67.3, 4

12. स नो मदानां पत इन्दो देवप्सरो असि।
सखेव सख्ये गातुवित्तमो भव।। ऋग्वेद IX.104.5

13. अपो सु म्यक्ष वरुण भियसं मत् सम्राळ् ऋतावोऽनु मा गृभाय।
दामेव वत्साद् वि मुमुग्धि अंहो नहि त्वदारे निमिषश्चनेशे।। ऋग्वेद II.28.6

14. इन्द्राय नूनमर्चतो क्थानि च ब्रवीतन।
सुता अमत्सुरिन्दवो ज्येष्ठं नमस्यता सहः।। ऋग्वेद I.84.5

15. य आत्मदा बलदा यस्य विश्व उपासते प्रशिषं यस्य देवाः।
यस्य छाया अमृतं यस्य मृत्युः कस्मै देवाय हविषा विधेम।। ऋग्वेद X.121.2

16. यस्मान्न ऋते विजयंते जनासः यं युध्यमाना अवसे हवंते।
यो विश्वस्य प्रतिमानं बभूव यो अच्युतच्युत् स जनास इंद्रः।। ऋग्वेद II.12.9

17. अयं सहस्रमृषिभिः सहस्कृतः समुद्र इव पप्रथे।
सत्यः सो अस्य महिमा गृणे शवो यज्ञेषु विप्रराज्ये।। ऋग्वेद VIII.3.4

18. इंद्र तुभ्यमित् अद्रिवोऽनुत्तं वज्रिन् वीर्यम्।
यद् ह त्यं मायिनं मृगं तमु त्वं माययावधीरर्चन्ननु स्वराज्यम्।।
नहि नु यादधीमसि इंद्रं को वीर्या परः।
तस्मिन् नृम्णमुत क्रतुं देवा ओजांसि सं दधुरर्चन्ननु स्वराज्यम्।। ऋग्वेद I.80.7, 15

19. ते त्वा मदा इन्द्र मादयन्तु शुष्मिणं तु विराधसं जरित्रे।
एको देवत्रा दयसे हि मर्तानस्मिञ्छूर सवने मादयस्व।। ऋग्वेद VII.23.5

20. नृणा मु त्वा नृतमं गीर्भिरुक्थैरभि प्र वीर मर्चता सबाधः।
सं सहसे पुरुमायो जिहीते नमो अस्य प्रदिव एक ईशे।। ऋग्वेद III.51.4

21. यथा वशंति देवास्तथेदसत् तदेषां नकिरा मिनत्।
अरावा चन मर्त्यः।। ऋग्वेद VIII.28.4

22. तुभ्येदमिंद्र परि षिच्यते मधु त्वं सुतस्य कलशस्य राजसि।
त्वं रयिं पुरुवीरामु नस्कृधि त्वं तपः परितप्य अजयः स्वः।। ऋग्वेद X.167.1

23. ऋतस्य तन्तुर्विततः पवित्र आ जिह्राया अग्रे वरुणस्य मायया।
धीराश्चित् तत् समिनक्षंत आशताऽ त्रा कर्तमव पदात्यप्रभुः।। ऋग्वेद IX.73.9

24. नकीमिन्द्रो निकर्तवे न शक्रः परिशक्तवे। विश्वं शृणोति पश्यति।। ऋग्वेद VIII.78.5

25. वयं ते वयः इंद्र विद्धि षु णः प्र भरामहे वाजयुर्न रथम्।
विपन्यवो दीध्यतो मनीषा सुम्नम् इयक्षंतः त्वावतो नॄन्।। ऋग्वेद II.20.1

26. स इत् जनेन स विशा स जन्मना स पुत्रैर्वाजं भरते धना नृभिः।
देवानां यः पितरमाविवासति श्रद्धामना ह विषा ब्रह्मणस्पतिम्।। ऋग्वेद II.26.3

27. सुवितस्य मनामहेऽति सेतुं दुराव्यम्।
साह्वांसो दस्युमव्रतम्।। ऋग्वेद IX.41.2

28. सुगो हि वो अर्यमन् मित्र पंथा अनृक्षरो वरुण साधुरस्ति।
तेनादित्या अधि वोचता नो यच्छता नो दुष्परिहंतु शर्म।। ऋग्वेद II.27.6

29. आ रयिमा सुचेतुनमा सुक्रतो तनूषु आ।
पांतमा पुरु स्पृहम्।। ऋग्वेद IX.65.30

30. त्वं हि नः पिता वसो त्वं माता शतक्रतो बभूविथ। अधा ते सुम्नमीमहे।।
ऋग्वेद VIII.98.11

31. इन्द्रः स दामने कृत ओजिष्ठः स मदे हितः। द्युम्नी श्लोकी स सोम्यः।।
ऋग्वेद VIII.93.8

32. त्वं विप्रस्त्वं कविर्मधु प्र जातमन्धसः। मदेषु सर्वधा असि।।
तव विश्वे सजोषसो देवासः पीतिमाशत। मदेषु सर्वधा असि। ऋग्वेद IX.18.2, 3

33. यो अर्यो मर्तभोजनं परादर्दाति दाशुषे।
इन्दो अस्मभ्यं शिक्षतु वि भजा भूरि ते वसुभक्षीय तव राधसः।। ऋग्वेद I.81.6

34. श्रिये जातः श्रिय आ निरियाय श्रियं वयो जरितृभ्यो दधानि।
श्रियं वसाना अमृतत्वमायन् भवंति सत्या समिथा मितद्रौ।। ऋग्वेद IX.94.4

35. श्रिये ते पादा दुव आ मिमिक्षुर्घृष्णुर्वज्री शवसा दक्षिणावान्।
वसानो अत्कं सुरभिं दृशे कं स्वर्ण नृतविषिरोबभूथ।। ऋग्वेद VI.29.3

36. मयि वर्चो अथो यशोऽथो यज्ञस्य यत् पयः।
परमेष्ठी प्रजापतिः दिवि द्यामिव दृंहतु। सामवेद 602

37. नृवत् त इन्द्र नृतमाभिरूती वंसीमहि वामं श्रोमतेभिः।
ईक्षे हि वस्व उभयस्य राजन् धा रत्नं महि स्थूरं बृहन्तम्।। ऋग्वेद VI.19.10

38. तस्य वयं सुमतौ यज्ञियस्यापि भद्रे सौमनसे स्याम।
स सुत्रामा स्ववान् इंद्रो अस्मे आरात् चित् द्वेषः सुनुतर्युयोतु।। ऋग्वेद VI.47.13

39. अयाम धीवतो धियोऽर्वद्भिः शक्र गोदरे। जयेम पृत्सु वज्रिवः।। ऋग्वेद VIII.92.11

40. न हि अन्यं बळाकरं मर्डितारं शतक्रतो। त्वं न इंद्र मृळय।।
ऋग्वेद VIII.80.1

41. यो गृणतामिदासिथापिः ऊती शिवः सखा। स त्वं न इंद्र मृळय।। ऋग्वेद VI.45.17

42. यस्ते स्तनः शशयो यो मयोभूर्येन विश्वा पुष्यसि वार्याणि।
यो रत्नधा वसुविद् यः सुदत्रः सरस्वति तमिह धातवे कः।। ऋग्वेद I.164.49

43. वि अस्मे अधि शर्म तत् पक्षा वयो न यंतन।
विश्वानि विश्ववेदसो वरूथ्या मनामहे अनेहसो व ऊतयः सुऊतयो व ऊतयः।।
ऋग्वेद VIII.47.3

44. सं पूषन् अध्वनस्तिर व्यंहो विमुचो नपात्। सक्ष्वा देव प्र णस्पुरः।।
यो नः पूषन्नघो वृको दुःशेव आदिदेशति। अप स्म तं पथो जहि।।
आ तत् ते दस्र मंतुमः पूषन्नवो वृणीमहे। येन पितृनचोदयः।।
ऋग्वेद I.42.1, 2, 5

45. अभ्यूर्णोति यत् नग्नम् भिषक्ति विश्वं यत् तुरम्।
प्रेमंधः ख्यन्निः श्रोणो भूत्।। ऋग्वेद VIII.79.2

46. तम् ऊतयो रणयन् शूरसातौ तम् क्षेमस्य क्षितयः कृण्वत त्राम्।
स विश्वस्य करुणस्य ईशः एको मरुत्वान् नो भवतु इंद्र ऊती। ऋग्वेद I.100.7

47. यो मृळयाति चक्रुषे चित् आगः वयं स्याम वरुणे अनागाः।
अनु व्रतानि अदितेः ऋधंतः यूयं पात स्वस्तिभिः सदा नः।। ऋग्वेद VII.87.7

48. इन्द्राय सोम पातवे मदाय परि षिच्यसे। मनश्चिन्मनसस्पतिः।। ऋग्वेद IX.11.8

49. कत्रव्यो अतसीनां तुरो गृणीत मर्त्यः।
नही न्वस्य महिमानमिंद्रियं स्वर्गृणंत आनशुः।। ऋग्वेद VIII.3.13

50. भगं धियं वा जयन्तः पुरंधिं नराशंसो ग्नास्पतिर्नो अव्याः।
आये वामस्य संगथे रयीणां प्रिया देवस्य सवितुः स्याम।। ऋग्वेद II.38.10

51. देवं नरः सवितारं विप्रा यज्ञैः सुवृक्तिभिः। नमस्यन्ति धियेषिताः।। ऋग्वेद III.62.12

52. प्र यद् वां मित्रावरुणा स्फूर्धन् प्रिया धाम युवधिता मिनन्ति।
न ये देवास ओहसा न मर्ता अयज्ञसाचो अप्योन पुत्राः।। ऋग्वेद VI.67.9

53. सदा व इंद्रश्चर्कृषत् आ उपो नु स सपर्यन्। न देवो वृतः शूर इंद्रः।।
सामवेद 196

54. अनर्शरातिं वसुदामुप स्तुहि भद्रा इन्द्रस्य रातयः।
सो अस्य कामं विधतो न रोषति मनो दानाय चोदयन्।। ऋग्वेद VIII.99.4

55. यत् पांचजन्यया विशेंद्रे घोषा असृक्षत।
अस्तृणात् बर्हणा विपो र्यो मानस्य स क्षयः।। ऋग्वेद VIII.63.7

56. अनुस्पष्टो भवत्येषो अस्य यो अस्मै रेवान् न सुनोति सोमम्।
निररत्नौ मघवा तं दधाति ब्रह्मद्विषो हंति अनानुदिष्टः।। ऋग्वेद X.160.4

57. चतुर्भिः साकं नवतिं च नामभिश्चक्रं न वृत्तं व्यतींरवीविपत्।
बृहच्छरीरो विमिमान ऋभिर्युवाकुमारः प्रत्येत्याहवम्।। ऋग्वेद I.155.6

58. य उशता मनसा सोममस्मै सर्वहृदा देवकामः सुनोति।
न गा इंद्रः तस्य परा ददाति प्रशस्तं इत् चारुमस्मै कृणोति।। ऋग्वेद X.160.3

59. वृषा न क्रुद्ध पतयद्रजःस्वा यो अर्यपत्नीर कृणोदिमा अपः।
स सुन्वते मघवा जीरदानवेऽविन्दज्ज्योतिर्मनवे हविष्मते।। ऋग्वेद X.43.8

60. इच्छंति देवाः सुन्वंतं न स्वप्नाय स्पृहयंति। यंति प्रमादं अतंद्रा।। ऋग्वेद VIII.2.18

61. यो जागार तमृचः कामयंते यो जागार तमु सामानि यंति।
यो जागार तमयं सोम आह तवाहमस्मि सख्येन्योकाः।।
अग्निर्जागार तमृचः कामयंते अग्निर्जागार तमु सामानि यंति।
अग्निर्जागार तमयं सोम आह तवाहमस्मि सख्ये न्योकाः।। ऋग्वेद V.44.14, 15

62. तत् विप्रासो विपन्यवो जागृवांसः समिंधते। विष्णोर्यत् परमं पदम्।। ऋग्वेद I.22.21

63. अध्यर्यवः पयसोधर्यथा गोः सोमेभिरीं पृणता भोजमिन्द्रम्।
वेदाहमस्य निभृतं म एतद् दित्सन्तं भूयो यजतश्चिकेत।। ऋग्वेद II.14.10

64. आ घा गमद्यदि श्रवत् सहस्रिणीभिरुतिभिः वाजेभिरुप नो हवम्।। ऋग्वेद I.30.8

65. उपप्रयंतः अध्वरं मंत्रं वोचेम अग्नये। आरे अस्मे च शृण्वते।। ऋग्वेद I.74.1

66. तं प्रत्नथा पूर्वथा विश्वथेमथा ज्येष्ठतातिं बर्हिषदं स्वर्विदम्।
प्रतीचीनं वृजनं दोहसे गिराऽऽशुं जयंतमनु यासु वर्धसे।। ऋग्वेद V.44.1

67. कदा चन स्तरीरसि न इंद्र सश्चसि दाशुषे।
उपोपेन्नु मघवन् भूय इत् नु ते दानं देवस्य पृच्यते।। ऋग्वेद VIII.51.7

68. त्वे विश्वा तविषी सध्यक् हिता तव राधः सोमपीथाय हर्षते।
तव वज्रः चिकिते बाह्वोर्हितः वृश्चा शत्रोरव विश्वानि वृष्ण्या।।
अनुव्रताय रंधयन् अपव्रतानाभूभिः इंद्रः श्नथयन् अनाभुवः।
वृद्धस्य चित् वर्धतो द्यामिनक्षतः स्तवानो वम्रो वि जघान संदिहः।।
ऋग्वेद I.51.7, 9

69. युधेन्द्रो महना वरिवश्चकार देवेभ्यः सत्पतिश्चर्षणिप्राः।
विवस्वतः सदने अस्य तानि विप्रा उक्थेभिः कवयो गृणन्ति।। ऋग्वेद III.34.7

70. प्र स मित्र मर्तो अस्तु प्रयस्वान् यस्त आदित्य शिक्षति व्रतेन।
न हन्यते न जीयते त्वोतो नैनमंहो अश्नोत्यंतितो न दूरात्।।
अयं मित्रो नमस्यः सुशेवो राजा सुक्षत्रो अजनिष्ट वेधाः।
तस्य वयं सुमतौ यज्ञियस्यापिभद्रे सौमनसे स्याम।। ऋग्वेद III.59.2, 4

71. ता गृणीहि नमस्येभिः शूषैः सुम्नेभिरिन्द्रावरुणा चकाना।
वज्रेणान्यः शवसा हन्ति वृत्रं सिषक्त्यन्यो वृजनेषु विप्रः।। ऋग्वेद VI.68.3

72. यद्वा प्रवृद्ध सत्पते न मरा इति मन्यसे उतो तत् सत्यमित्तव।।
ये सोमासः परावति ये अर्वावति सुन्विरे सर्वांस्तान् इन्द्र गच्छसि।।
ऋग्वेद VIII.93.5-6

73. सुपर्णा एत आसते मध्य आरोधने दिवः।
ते सेधंति पथो वृकं तरंतं यह्वतीरपो वित्तं मे अस्य रोदसी।। ऋग्वेद I.105.11

74. अस्य पीत्वा मदानामिन्द्रो वृत्राण्यप्रति। जघान जघनच्च नु।। ऋग्वेद IX.23.7

75. अस्येदिन्द्रो मदेष्वा विश्वा वृत्राणि जिघ्नते। शूरो मघा च मंहते।।
ऋग्वेद IX.1.10

76. स्तोता यत् ते अनुव्रतः उक्थानि ऋतुथा दधे। शुचिः पावकः उच्यते सो अद्भुतः।।
ऋग्वेद VIII.13.19

77. एतो नु इंद्रं स्तवाम शुद्धं शुद्धेन साम्ना।
शुद्धैः उक्थैः वावृध्वासं शुद्धः आशीर्वान् ममत्तु।।
इंद्रः शुद्धो हि नो रयिं शुद्धो रत्नानि दाशुषे।
शुद्धो वृत्राणि जिघ्नसे शुद्धो वाजं सिषाससि।। ऋग्वेद VIII.95.7, 9

78. ता भूरिपाशावनृतस्य सेतू दुरत्येतू रिपवे मर्त्याय।
ऋतस्य मित्रावरुणा पथा वामपो न नावा दुरिता तरेम।। ऋग्वेद VII.65.3

79. मित्रो अंहोश्चिदादुरु क्षयाय गातुं वनते। मित्रस्य हि प्रतूर्वतः सुमतिरस्ति विधतः।।
वयं मित्रस्यावसि स्याम सप्रथस्तमे। अनेहसस्त्वोतयः सत्रा वरुणशेषसः।।
ऋग्वेद V.65.4, 5

80. द्रुपदादिव मुमुचानः स्विन्नः स्नात्वा मलादिव।
पूतं पवित्रेण इव आज्यं विश्वे शुंभंतु मा एनसः।। अथर्ववेद VI.115.3

81. देवकृतस्यैनसो अवयजनमसि मनुष्यकृतस्यैनसो अवयजनमसि पितृकृतस्यैनसो अवयजनमसि आत्मकृतस्यैनसो अवयजनमस्येनस एनसो अवयजनमसि।
यतच्अहंएनो विद्वाँश्चकार यत्च अविद्वांस्तस्य सर्वस्य एनसो अवयजनमसि।।
यजुर्वेद VIII.13

82. अस्ति देवाः अंहोरुर्वस्ति रत्नम् अनागसः। आदित्याः अद्भुतैनसः।। ऋग्वेद VIII.67.7

83. न पापासो मनामहे नारायासो न जल्हवः।
यदित् नु इंद्रं वृषणं सचा सुते सखायं कृणवामहै।। ऋग्वेद VIII.61.11

84. वसुर्वसुपतिर्हि कमस्यग्ने विभावसुः। स्याम ते सुमतावपि।। ऋग्वेद VIII.44.24

85. वस्यां इंद्रासि मे पितुः उत भ्रातुः अभुंजतः।
माता च मे छदयथः समा वसो वसुत्वनाय राधसे।। ऋग्वेद VIII.1.6

86. त्राता नो बोधि ददृशान आपिरभिख्याता मर्डिता सोम्यानाम्।
सखा पिता पितृतमः पितृणां कर्तेमु लोकमुशते वयोधाः।। ऋग्वेद IV.17.17

87. उतोघा ते पुरुष्या इदासन् येषां पूर्वेषामश्रृणोर्ऋषीणाम्।
अधाहं त्वा मघवञ्जोहवीमि त्वं न इन्द्रासि प्रमतिः पितेव।। ऋग्वेद VII.29.4

88. त्वं हि नः पिता वसो, त्वं माता शतक्रतो बभूविथ अधा ते सुम्नमीमहे।।
अथर्ववेद XX.108.2

89. इंद्र क्रतुं न आ भर पिता पुत्रेभ्यो यथा।
शिक्षा णो अस्मिन् पुरुहूत यामनि जीवा ज्योतिरशीमहि।। ऋग्वेद VII.32.26

90. शिक्षेयमिन्महयते दिवेदिवे राय आ कुहचिद्विदे।
नहि त्वदन्यन्मघवन् न आप्यं वस्यो अस्ति पिता चन।। ऋग्वेद VII.32.19

91. तत्रः प्रत्नं सख्यमस्तु युष्मे इत्था वदद्भिर्वलमङ्गिरोभिः।
हत्रच्युतच्युद् दस्मेषयन्तमृणोः पुरो वि दुरो अस्य विश्वाः।। ऋग्वेद VI.18.5

92. य एक इत् तमुष्टुहि कृष्टीनां विचर्षणिः। पतिर्जज्ञे वृषक्रतुः।। ऋग्वेद VI.45.16

93. शास इत्था महाँ अस्यमित्रखादो अद्भुतः।
न यस्य हन्यते सखा न जीयते कदा चन।। ऋग्वेद X.152.1

94. न यस्य ते शवसान सख्यमानंश मर्त्यः। न किः शवांसि ते नशत्।।
यस्य ते स्वादु सख्यं स्वाद्वी प्रणीतिरद्रिवः। यज्ञो वितन्तसाय्यः।।
ऋग्वेद VIII.68.8, 11

95. आ ते स्तोत्राण्युद्यतानि यन्त्वन्तर्विश्वासु मानुषीषु दिक्षु।
देहि नुमे यन्मे अदत्तो असि युज्यो मे सप्तपदः सखासि।। अथर्ववेद V.11.9

96. समा नौ बन्धुर्वरुण समा जा वेदाहं तद्यन्नावेषा समा जा।
ददामि तद्यत्ते अदत्तो अस्मि युज्यस्ते सप्तपदः सखास्मि।। अथर्ववेद V.11.10

97. ते घेदग्ने स्वाध्यो ये त्वा विप्र निदधिरे नृचक्षसम्।
विप्रासो देव सुक्रतुम्।। ऋग्वेद VIII.19.17

98. अनुत्तमा ते मघवन्नकिर्नु न त्वावाँ अस्ति देवता विदानः।
न जायमानो नशते न जातो यानि करिष्या कृणुहि प्रवृद्ध।। ऋग्वेद I.165.9

99. इंद्र तुभ्यमिन्मघवन्नभूम वयं दात्रे हरिवो मा वि वेनः।
नकिरापिर्दृशे मर्त्यत्रा किमंग रध्रचोदनं त्वाहुः।। ऋग्वेद VI.44.10

100. वयं घा ते त्वे इद्विंद्र विप्रा अपि ष्मसि।
नहि त्वदन्यः पुरुहूत कश्चन मघवन् अस्मि मर्डिता।।
त्वं नो अस्या अमतेरुत क्षुधो ऽ भिशस्तेरव स्पृधि।
त्वं न ऊती तव चित्रया धिया शिक्षा शचिष्ठ गातुवित्।। ऋग्वेद VIII.66.13, 14

101. मन्ये त्वा यज्ञियं यज्ञियानां मन्ये त्वा च्यवनमच्युतानाम्।
मन्ये त्वा सत्वनामिन्द्र केतुं मन्ये त्वा वृषभं चर्षणीनाम्।। ऋग्वेद VIII.96.4

102. भगभक्तस्य ते वयमुदशेम तवावसा। मूर्धानं राय आरभे।।
शतं ते राजन् भिषजः सहस्रं उर्वी गभीरा सुमतिष्टे अस्तु।
बाधस्व दूरे निर्ऋतिं पराचैः कृतंचित् एनः प्र मुमुग्धि अस्मत्।।
तत् त्वा यामि ब्रह्मणा वंदमानस् तत् आ शास्ते यजमानो हविर्भिः।
अहेळमानो वरुणेह बोधि उरुशंस मा न आयुः प्र मोषीः।।
ऋग्वेद I.24.5, 9, 11

103. त्वमङ्ग प्र शंसिषो देवः शविष्ठ मर्त्यम्।
न त्वदन्यो मघवन्नस्ति मर्डितेन्द्र ब्रवीमि ते वचः।। ऋग्वेद I.84.19

104. क्रतूयंति क्रतवो हृत्सु धीतयः वेनंति वेनाः पतयंति आदिशः।
न मर्डिता विद्यते अन्य एभ्यः देवेषु मे अधि कामा अयंसत।। ऋग्वेद X.64.2

105. हवीमभिर्हवते यो हविर्भिः अवस्तोमेभी रुद्रं दिषीय।
ऋदूदरः सुहवो मा नो अस्यै बभ्रुः सुशिप्रो रीरधन् मनायै।।
उन्मा ममंद वृषभो मरुत्वान् त्वक्षीयसा वयसा नाधमानम्।
घृणीव च्छायामरपा अशीयाऽऽ विवासेयं रुद्रस्य सुम्नम्।। ऋग्वेद II.33.5, 6

106. यथा पूर्वेभ्यो जरितृभ्य इंद्र मय इवापो न तृष्यते बभूथ।
तामनुत्वा निविदं जोहवीमि विद्यामेषं वृजनं जीरदानुम्।। ऋग्वेद I.175.6

107. यज्ञो हि ष्मेन्द्रं कश्चिदृन्धज्जुहुराणश्चिन्मनसा परियन्।
तीर्थे नाच्छा तातृषाणमोको दीर्घो न सिध्रमा कृणोत्यध्वा।। ऋग्वेद I.173.11

108. यन्मे छिद्रं चक्षुषो हृदयस्य मनसो वातितृण्णम् बृहस्पतिर्मे तद्दधातु।
शं नो भवतु भुवनस्य यस्पतिः।। यजुर्वेद XXXVI.2

109. वि नो देवासो अद्रुहोऽच्छिद्रं शर्म यच्छत।
न यद् दुराद् वसवो नू चिदन्तितो वरूथमादधर्षति।। ऋग्वेद VIII.27.9

CHAPTER V

The Spiritual Teacher

1. Necessity of a Spiritual Teacher. Life on this earth has been described as a river or as a sea by many a seer. Śamkara in his commentary on Aitareya Upaniṣad, I.2.1, exquisitely describes this ocean. It is filled with the water of sorrow which is caused by ignorance and desires; it is infested with terrible crocodiles in the form of deadly diseases and old age; people who are caught there are lamenting their lot. A man can be saved only if, by his good fortune, he meets with a teacher full of compassion for the beings that are drowning. In Jñāneśvarī we have a marvellous description of Māyānadī or the flood of illusion (VII.68-102). In more or less the same terms Kabir gives us a continued metaphor of a river of sorrow. "Who can direct the ship of a man's life," he asks, "except a spiritual guide, who knows the danger spots and situations, and possesses the power to carry the ship successfully to the other shore of existence?"[1] The subject has occupied the mind of our ancestors. We shall see how they express their inability to proceed without help. We will them turn to a very important topic of characteristics of a spiritual teacher. Only he who has realised God can be a Guru. After noting moral and mystical marks of a teacher we shall take a survey of the functions of the teacher of which the Vedas speak. Side by side it is important to understand the qualifications of a student. An aspirant feels grateful to the master for his guidance. A fortunate person is he who gets initiation from a teacher who belongs to a rich spiritual tradition. He tries his best to be worthy of that tradition and always prays to his preceptor for grace.

The Vedic seers may not have put the subject of the necessity of a Guru in a specific and precise way. But they have described the plight of a man who is confused and is unable to find his way

1 R.D. Ranade, Pathway to God in Hindi Literature, P. 137

out. The sage Kūrma Gārtsamada exclaims: "I cannot see what stands on my right and what stands on my left. Oh Ādityas, I cannot make out what is in front of me and what is behind me. Oh Vasus, I am infirm and ignorant. Still with the assistance of your guidance, I can attain the fear-dispelling light" (S.1). But it is not so easy to find such guides. God does not reveal Himself in a liberal way. To meet a spiritual teacher itself requires a good deal of merit. "Who is there who has known the direction that leads unto God? Is there any one who has declared it here? Only the lower earthly abodes are ordinarily seen; the higher ones exist truly in the secret supreme region" (S.2). A new-comer can take only a well-trodden path. "We have now arrived at the road and shall follow it as best as we can. Whatever task we can accomplish, we shall take up and complete. The all-knowing Agni is the priest and he will prescribe the rituals and the seasons of sacrifice to be offered to the gods" (S.3). One who wishes to reach Brahman must learn at the hands of a realised soul. "He will give instruction regarding Brahman that enlivens vegetation. The instruction is contained neither in the earth nor in the heavens" (S.4).

He who has not experienced God cannot guide others. In fact, "a Ṛṣi is one who is endowed with the intuitive vision of God. The Aupamanyavas say that the Ṛṣis actually visualised the Mantras and hence they were called Ṛṣis. It is so, because in the course of meditation, the form of unborn God Himself descended before their eyes. This is the essential feature of Ṛṣihood" (S.5). The Taittirīya Āraṇyaka offers the same explanation of the word: "The form of self-existent Brahman descended before the eyes of the ancient holy saints; and they thus attained the status of Ṛṣis. This is the most essential characteristic of a seer" (S.6). A Ṛṣi is also described in Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa as having reached that high pedestal with strenuous penance (S.7). The knowledge thus gained was imparted to others by the sages. "The Ṛṣis attained the intuitive experience of God and saw the way to Him. Afterwards they communicated by initiation the same to their disciples who had no such experience" (S.8). "Oh Soma, flow on with a clean current for the worship of gods and enter the heart of Indra which is your treasure-house. Carry

us along without any harm. One who is himself familiar with the landscape can provide correct landmarks to a layman" (S.9).

A spiritual teacher has to discharge a two-fold function. Firstly, when a disciple strays away from the proper avenue, the spiritual teacher makes him realise his mistake and, secondly, he brings the disciple on to the proper path. "Please forgive us, Oh Agni, we admit our derelictions. I was drifting far away into the wilderness, but now I have recourse to this path. You are a friend, protector and supporter of your devotees and you can raise the mortal men to the position of a divine seer" pleads Hiraṇyastūpa Āngirasa (S.10). Or again, "Do not go away from me in anger, Oh Agni. Indra, who is the custodian of God's laws, revealed this to me. He knew the way and he saw you; I have received instruction from him and have therefore come to you" (S.11). Thus does the spiritual teacher tend the erring sheep. The same Mantra is repeated elsewhere in the Ṛgveda with a slight variation in words. Coupled with it is another stanza visualised by Ṛṣi Kavaṣa Ailūṣa which speaks in unmistakable terms about the function of the spiritual teacher to offer proper guidance to a disciple. "Indra, the custodian of God's laws made it known to me that you are lying hidden, Oh Agni, in waters. I have received instruction from Him and have therefore come to you. A stranger on the way will naturally ask for guidance from one who knows the path and proceeds further accordingly. This is the most effective method; it enables a man to take a straight and quick road" (S.12). The word used is Anuśiṣṭa i.e., instructed or taught, a clear reference to the teacher-disciple relation. It is also specifically mentioned that Indra was a far advanced person as he had 'seen' Agni (Cacakṣa). Well, this experience of Indra also did not arise all of a sudden. Shri Aurobindo translates the phrase अनु हि त्व चचक्ष as 'sought after and saw thee'. It shows that Indra must have himself practised penance, before he could feast his eyes on the form of God. The teacher perfects himself by his own spiritual practice and then becomes qualified to instruct others. We read that, "one is required to approach a Brāhmaṇa (one who has realised Brahman) for the mystical apprehension of the ultimate reality" (S.13). The function of giving apt directions is many times assigned to Agni who is the intermediary between men and gods. Yāska explains the word Agni

thus: He is called Agni because he is Agraṇī, a leader, one who leads or guides man; अग्रं नीयते – अग्रं+नी=अग्रणी (S.14). Agni leads a man upto the supreme goal (अग्र) of human life. Thus he performs the function of a spiritual teacher, who leads his disciples. "Oh Agni, proceed ahead of those who wish to reach God; you are the eye of men and gods. Those who have befriended the learned men from the family of Bhṛgus, want to sacrifice to gods. Let their journey towards God be free of troubles" (S.15). In fact Agni is said to have been assigned this task by gods themselves. "You are the one who extends invitation to gods to attend sacrifices. Gods have themselves appointed you to this post for the benefit of humanity" (S.16). "Pray, may divine Agni kindly lead me to that region where abide the sages who by initiation and penance have realised the highest" (S.17). We have to note that it is the celestial Agni who undertakes this responsibility and not the Agni on the earth which is harnessed by men. "This (terrestrial Agni) is led by men (नीयते नृभिः), while that (celestial Agni) leads man from this material world to the spiritual world, (नयति असौ); therefore, the two Agnis, even though they bear the same name, are engaged in distinct types of activities" (S.18).

There is no end to poems where Agni is mentioned as a spiritual guide. Thus we read: "For felicity and bliss men resort to the guidance of divine Agni, who has realised the truth, who is endowed with the vision of all things and who is ever ready to respond to the call of devotees" (S.19). We may refer to two verses addressed to Agni. One says that Agni is sitting at the seat of worship and acts as a giver of riches (S.20). The other stresses the point that Agni shows the way to gain wealth, to those who know his secret place and sing his praises (S.21). The purport of another hymn is that Agni is bliss incarnate and radiates bliss (S.22). It is not possible to be free from the debt of such a teacher. The most one can do is to follow him with utmost faith, bearing in mind that the path shown by him is the surest and the best. One should do obeisance to him and leave the rest to him.

2. Characteristics of a Spiritual Teacher. We find in the Vedas a good account of the marks of a spiritual teacher. A glance at these will show that some of them are moral and some mystical.

(a) Moral Characteristics. Agni who is often deemed to be a teacher, displays utter humility. "Inspite of His high status, He has no inkling of pride in Him; He is lovable in manners. Though hot himself, He radiates not heat but cool comfort. He graces the sacrificial hall by His presence" (S.23). Pride is said to be a great enemy of man. A man's achievements come to nothing because of his pride. If he is vain and proud of his abilities he is likely to hurt others' feelings. Agni is also described as having devotion to truth. In one psalm it is stated: "those ancient seers who are visualisers of real Mantras (Satya Mantra) lived happily in the company of gods. They created Uṣas, i.e. they were endowed with illumination as well as with the experience of hidden divine light (Sun). They had one common ideal and therefore, they saw eye to eye with one another and never quarrelled among themselves and never transgressed the laws of gods" (S.24). We learn about truthfulness of Agni from Ṛṣi, Dīrghatamas Aucathya. "Agni is the first one to teach observance of holy laws. In the clouds and in the forests He is fearsome; but He is now established at the place of sacrifice. He is all-knowing, is an exponent of the eternal laws and is truth incarnate" (S.25). Then there is the virtue of sincerity. Sincere in their praises of Ṛta and sincere in their meditation, Āngirasas, the sons of Agni, exhibit this virtue (S.26).

(b) Mystical Characteristics. Meditation on the divine name is the second nature of all those who want to enter the divine precincts. "They inhabit the same exalted region and protect the source of the eternal moral law. And they meditate on the secret name" (S.27). "To you, who are wise and omniscient, are hereby tendered the secret words of guidance. I, a devout seeker, adore you with ardent prayers and eulogical songs" (S.28). Here also concentration on the divine name is stressed. They worship the name with all their minds and with all their hearts. By their direct experience of reality, they get the power to instruct others. In a remarkable passage are depicted all these characteristics of a spiritual teacher. Agni is here described as the first to be worshipped during sacrifices (Medheṣu prathama). He is all bliss and spreads bliss; he excels in moral perfection (Sādhu). Besides, he has the cause and means and power to enable his disciplies to have a vision of God. This, in fact, is the first and

foremost function of a spiritual teacher. "How should we give offering to Agni who is immortal and is a propagator of righteousness? He surely has the capacity to fulfil the task of bringing the immortals in the midst of the mortals. What kind of prayer should we sing, so that it will be accepted by the great Agni? His understanding is beyond measure; he is the effector of perfection. He rides a wonderful chariot just like Mitra. Those who want to go in submission to the gods, initially invoke Agni himself. Let that Agni who is the greatest among men and who is a terror to his enemies take us under his wings and accept our prayers. O Agni, be you pleased to appreciate the supplications of the devotees who are courageous and full of purity. The learned Gautama sang the praises of this righteous and omniscient Agni. He was pleased with the worshipper, and in turn blessed him with riches, purity and plenty" (S.29). Agni is also described as "possessing brilliance, all-enveloping power and beatitude, and as being free from ignorance. He inspires men in just the correct way and leads them to the highest bliss" (S.30). "Those who really know, visualise the smoke coming out of the mouth of Agni", says the sage Kabandha (S.31). Smoke is mentioned as one of the harbingers of spiritual experience by the Śvetāśwatara Upaniṣad (II.11), at a later date. Perhaps the present Vedic lyric contains a seed thereof. Agni, who is generally taken as a minister of gods, knows both gods and men. In fact it is because he has such knowledge that he can lead man to God. "Agni knows the origin of gods and he knows the secrets of men. He is the bestower of wealth. Pray to him, for he illumines the path which leads to God" (S.32). It is noteworthy that Agni is said to be the knower of secrets in the hearts of men. The saint of Umadi used to say that however secret your thoughts and actions, the saint has an easy access to them. It is the knowledge of Reality that confers leadership on a person. He becomes a teacher; his age, caste or religion are absolutely irrelevant to the spiritual height he has reached. A story goes that Āngirasa addressed the elders as 'sons', on which they became anġry. But he justified his action by saying that he was a composer of Mantras (Mantrakṛt) and, as such, a person in authority. The gods later on corroborated his view (S.33). The same story is referred to by Manu also (Manusmṛti II. 151-153). He alone who

possesses spiritual knowledge can disseminate it. "The Brahmacārin was born before knowledge; in fact it was through him that the sacred knowledge of Brahman became manifest" (S.34). Or, "Let that pious one who nourishes speech (Gandharva) reveal to us the immortal treasure situated in the heart. Its three forms are hidden in the depth of the heart and he who knows this, becomes the father of the father" (S.35). In another verse given by the sage Nābhāka Kāṇva, the learned man is said to be knowing the mysterious names (S.36). It tells us how a spiritual teacher receives the divine names for being imparted to the disciples. The names do not spring from his imagination; nor are they arbitrarily chosen from among a host of names of deities just to be passed on to the aspirants. He actually visualises them during meditation.

3. Functions of a Spiritual Teacher. We shall now discuss how a spiritual teacher discharges three types of functions in relation to his disciples — psychological, moral and mystical. In the first place he frees the disciples from sorrow and fear; secondly, he forgives their moral lapses and wipes out their sins; in the third place, he guides them to attain to Godhead.

(a) Psychological Function. Coming to the psychological aspect, we read that the Guru wards off an aspirant's calamities, becomes his friend and assures his welfare. In a beautiful orison, which heaps virtue upon virtue on Agni, we read: "Oh you great knower, Agni, your rays are ever alert, speedy, pleasant, devoid of idleness, givers of shelter to devotees, untiring and protecting. Let them come together and protect us" (S.37). "We praise that shining and powerful God, annihilator of enemies. We invite him from his grand abode with these eulogical prayer-songs. Let him put an end to our sorrows and sufferings and carry us across our difficulties" (S.38). Agni is looked upon as a solid support on whom one can ever rely, so that once his friendship is assured, a man needs no other confidant, not even a son. "Oh prolifically kindled Agni, devotees are pleased to call you to the place of worship. Your form is beautiful and soothing to the eye. If you, Oh truthful one, are a constant companion, I do not wish to have even a son; let us not be forsaken and forgotten in our old age" (S.39). Incidentally, it seems that right

from the Vedic times, man was very much worried about his security and well-being in his old age. This kind of worry is not entirely a result of modern industrialised world! "Oh Agni, on whom do you look as your friend? Who offers you sacrifice? What is your real nature and what is your abode? Indeed, you are a friend of one and all, you are our great ally. Those who love you, get your love in sweet reciprocation" (S.40). The spiritual teacher does not merely perform the function of eliminating pain; he positively confers happiness on the disciple. "I hand over this worshipper, Oh gods in heaven, to your custody along with the treasure bestowed upon him by the great seer Agni. Let him follow you to that highest heaven" (S.41).

(b) Moral Function. Along with psychological ills, moral evils are also whisked away by the master. The aspirant pleads his innocence and exclaims that if any evil act is committed by him inadvertantly, he should be excused for that. "We have not committed any great sin secretly against you, Oh Vasus, nor have we openly perpetrated any provocation on gods. Let us not be understood as wearing the body of falsehood. For freedom and felicity, we offer our homage to Aditi, who is endowed with the all-creative power" (S.42). "Oh Indra, you know how to cleanse the mind of foul propensities. You resemble the sun who remains uncontaminated ever and on" (S.43). The preceptor has the power to weed out the evil tendencies of his disciples only because he is purity incarnate. Is there any one who is more immaculate than the all-clarifying Agni? Hence he has been elevated as the holy one in every way. "Agni is the holiest among the holy men (Śuci-vrata-tama). He is a virtuous sage and illumined seer. He becomes more radiant when He is invoked with ardour" sings Virūpa Āngirasa (S.44). The spiritual guide after flushing out the dirt from those who repent for having done wrong, leads them to greater prosperity. Here is a Mantra where the devotee prays not merely for excellence but for right intellect which is the basis of morality. "When your worshippers are over-powered by foes, external and internal, you rush to rescue them at the critical moment and uproot all the enemies. Oh omnipresent God, forgive us for going astray and neglecting our duty. We had to make a long journey to reach upto you. You are our torch-bearer and father; you yourself are our

benefactor. You can raise even an ignorant man to the position of an illumined seer (Ṛṣikṛt martyānām). Accept our songs which we are singing from the depth of our hearts. Lead us on the righteous way and endow us with spotless mind" (S.45). It is known that a man who feels real remorse for his derelictions, confesses them and asks for forgiveness. The history of religious literature is full of 'confessions'. He alone hides his wrong doings, who does not have any qualms of conscience. Real penitence is not so simple a matter. If one repents and still retains whatever was acquired by wrong means, it is not real repentance. As Hamlet's uncle realises, crime is not scrubbed clean so long as one retains the effects. Could he be pardoned for the foul murder of his brother? His sorrow-striken words are:

> "That cannot be; since I am still possessed
> Of those effects for which I did the murder—
> My crown, mine own ambition, and my queen."
>
> (Act III, scene 3)

Self-reproach begins with giving up all that is acquired by unrighteous means. The next step is a determination never to repeat the ugly crime and sticking doggedly to that resolution in the face of all temptations. Here is a petition by a regretful person. "Oh Agni, be pleased with our libations and recommend us to Mitra, Varuṇa and Indra. Forgive us for our faults. Let Aryamā and Aditi grant us amnesty for our misconduct" (S.46). We find utterances which depict typical human ways. There are aspirants who are full of self-reproof for having taken resort to rotten ways. They now ask for remission. But there are yet others who want to escape the responsibility (and consequent punishment) for their misbehaviour. "Whatever filthy act we may have committed by offending the gods through words, mind and body, it is only the result of seductive inducement of the corrupt bystanders. Oh Vasus, place the burden of that sin on that evil-doer" (S.47). Here is a very important suggestion that faults are committed not merely by hands but also by mind and speech. They are subtler ones, but they are equally, if not more, dangerous. In fact, the sin committed by the mind is a real cancer, because it remains undetected and eats into the vitals of an aspirant.

(c) Mystical Function. The most important function of a spiritual teacher is to guide the devout in their spiritual pilgrimage. Agni is usually installed as a helper and is said to inspire the devotees. "He enlivens the minds of even those of dull intellect. He is established on this earth as a watch and ward officer. Let him not forsake us. Oh Agni, let our minds be ever fixed on you" (S.48). "I chant the glories of Agni, the possessor of revealed divine words (Ṛgmiya); in turn, let him reveal the heavenly beings to me. Let him, who adorns the sacrificial halls both of mortals and immortals, be our constant companion and drive off the evil-minded ones" (S.49). The function of being an intermediary is again brought into bold relief in another ode. "As among men, so among gods, you are the protector of the treasures. You are verily a natural bund. Streams of water flow round about you" (S.50). The spiritual guide is the source of auspiciousness. "Oh lustrous Agni, we are your devotees, bless us; for all your blessings come true. We are just kids, be indulgent to us and remain with us. Your very presence is reassuring" (S.51). Agni covers a wide range of functions. "He is a real knower, excellent administrator and seer" (S.52). "He is the priest who recites the prayers of the Ṛgveda at a sacrifice (Hotṛ), as well as one of the sixteen officiating priests (Potṛ). He is one of the chief officiating priests at a Soma sacrifice (Neṣṭṛ) as well as fire itself; He is also an advisor (Praśāstṛ). He is again the officiating priest who recites Yajurveda (Adhvaryu). He is one of the four priests at a Soma sacrifice (Brahmā) as well as the sacrificer (Gṛhapati). Offer fuel to this Fire-god and he will run your errands and bring gods to your sacrifice" (S.53). Agni is this, that and what not at the time of a sacrifice; he alone runs the whole show. So too the spiritual teacher takes upon himself the whole responsibility of his disciple. To him the student prays, "Oh you all-knowing Agni, lead us to the holy treasures by the straight path. We slip and stumble. Be by our side so that we maintain balance. We bow to you" says Agastya Maitrāvaruṇi (S.54).

4. Qualifications of a Disciple. Granted that one can attain to the status of a Guru only after arduous penance, but to become a disciple also is not a simple matter. A pupil has to lead a very

disciplined life. The relation between them is reciprocal. The disciple receives with pious and grateful reverence what the teacher gives with fond and loving care. Let us have a look at the sketch of this relation. The Vedas spell out the figure of an humble student and also of a celebrated teacher. The learner has to keep in mind that a long life of mighty efforts and self-denials has made the teacher what he is. "Hark, approach with humility these fervent devotees of God. They have undergone trying austerities and intense penance" (S.55). And what does he do? "Day after day this Agni, who glows on the background of the dawns, who leads a contingent of the learned, awakens all. Kindled by the devotees and deities, he shines by his immence lustre and after staving in the door of darkness, opens the way for light" (S.56). Vijayadāsa, a Kannada mystic-poet, expressing this feeling, uses the same expression. "Today, the door of the palace of spiritual experience has opened out to me". His Guru had given him the key to open the door.[1] How does one draw near such a teacher? We are familiar with the famous Upaniṣadic description:

तद्विज्ञानार्थं स गुरुमेवाभिगच्छेत्।
समित्पाणिः श्रोत्रियं ब्रह्मनिष्ठम्।। (Muṇḍakopaniṣad, I.2.12)

(For knowing that Reality, he should approach, with sacrificial sticks in hand, a teacher, who is well-versed in Vedic knowledge and is absorbed in Brahman). The idea is already present in the Vedas. "The sparkling Maruts paid respect to you by offering ghee for three years. After that they received befitting names which conferred on them authority to perform sacrifices" (S.57). Surely these are the names on which they meditated. A real pupil is he who has an earnestness to be free from the bonds of Samsāra. The cow has a mind to suckle the calf and the calf has always a desire to be nourished. While the teacher has a will to teach, the student, a determination to learn. "The cow lows gently and licks the head of her calf who has his eyes only half open. Then she directs him to her udder which is full with milk" (S.58). The disciple should also

1 R.D. Ranade, Pathway to God in Kannada Literature, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Chowpatty, Bombay 400 007, 1960, P. 152

be prepared to lead an arduous life, and not conduct himself in a humdrum style. He has to accept the restrictions imposed by the teacher. "Do not rely entirely on your powers which are limited; cast off your egoistic efforts, be intent on possessing the word carrying spiritual power. Along with your friends stick to the moral path" (S.59). Or, "I wish to have a heart-to-heart alliance with you. Set your hearts in tune with mine. I shall establish a rapport with you. Let your behaviour be conciliatory with mine" (S.60). The student has to bear in mind that many great persons have laboured in this way. "The heaven and earth have come into my fold; so have Saraswatī, Indra and Agni. Oh Saraswatī let us be prosperous" (S.61). It clearly indicates that a student has to be very cautious so that he remains worthy of the teacher. He has to give up vagrancies and be prepared to accept the role of a follower. This is what is implied in the popular Kannada song: "If you desire to come to us you have to accomodate to *our* way of life. Moreover, if you want to invite us to your place, even then you have to accomodate to *our* way of life". Thus in both the cases, it is the disciple who has to be in conformity with the teacher's instructions.

We have to remember that trodding the spiritual path is hazardous and the discipline expected of the traveller is very exacting at times. Kabir for example, has thrown a stubborn challenge to those who wished to follow him:

कबिरा खड़ा बाजार में लिये लुकाठी हाथ।
जो घर फूँके आपना चले हमारे साथ।।

(Kabir, on one occasion took his stand in the market place with a fire-brand in his hand and said: He alone need follow me who will set fire to his house, property and possessions).[1] Once tested, the student receives the teacher's attention in abundance.

5. A Disciple's Indebtedness to the Guru. Among the basic needs of man may be counted the need for security. Not mere physical security would do; man wants an assurance that his minimum basic needs will always be met. If shortage of food tells

1 See R.D. Ranade, Pathway to God in Hindi Literature, Pp.295-296

on the health, the fear of shortage does no less so. Elephants in the deep jungles of Africa have been reported to have suffered from heart ailments when they witnessed that the forests from which they were getting food-supply, were being cut down. We do not know whether they had really interpreted the disappearance of trees as portentous of shortage of food in future; but it is clear that there definitely was some stress and strain which affected the big animals. The phrase 'in search of new pastures' literally suggests a tendency to seek an assured supply. Psychologists have found out that little babies have shown less intense fear on seeing unkown and fearful objects, when they are in the arms of the mother. The first thing a young child would do, when terrified, is to clutch at the mother's garment. What is true of children, is true of the grown-ups. Man seeks something to fall back upon, a nest where his anxieties are completely taken over or at least shared. He wants security of a house, a father, a teacher. "Keep ascending and do not revert back. I shall give you vitality and strength. Mount this chariot which bestows bliss and immortality. You yourself will occupy the position of a teacher when ripe. Do not weep for the departed; for that will distract you. Come hither and advance to light from darkness. I shall hold your hands" (S.62). We need not be stunned at the self-confidence of the Guru, for the cardinal principle of teacherhood is the Guru's conviction of the potency of his own spiritual experiences. The height he has reached raises him above the common run of men. "Firmly establish herein your life-breath, your vital airs, your very life and mind. I shall save you from the eye of the evil spirit and elevate you by means of the divine word" (S.63). The disciple for ever remembers that the teacher has straightened his mind and brought about his spiritual regeneration. The teacher Prājāpatya Yakṣmanāśana exclaims, "Oh you ailing one, I have freed you from the chains of death and reclaimed you. You are as if reborn. Come here, you have gained clear vision. A whole life of bliss is ahead. There is no place for anxiety whatsoever" (S.64).

The preceptor who is more than a mother to his disciple, sees that the latter's vulnerable points are not exposed to the world and that he is fully protected. "I cover your tender parts with a coat of arms. Let Soma spread the cloth of immortality on you. Let Varuṇa

make that garment impregnable. Let the God rejoice in your victory" (S.65). "Whosoever intends to harm me—whether an enemy outside or inside — may God discomfit him. Prayer to the divine is my inner coat of mail, ब्रह्म वर्म ममांतरम् (S.66). It is only the Sāmaveda which makes a significant addition: Divine grace is my inner coat of mail शर्म वर्म ममांतरम् (S.67). With such words the teacher launches his disciple on the religious course and wishes him godspeed. Wherein lies the secret of this supremacy of the teacher? He reveals it by pointing out that it is from divinity itself that he gets this authority. "Varuṇa disclosed to me, who am possessed of a rich intellect, that the cow has twenty-one names. He gave me an insight into reality so that I should initiate my disciples" (S.68). It is no wonder that pupils, who have come into contact with teachers having such a high spiritual status and wielding a transfiguring influence, have themselves grown into sovereign seers themselves. The highest aim would be to have the assurance from the Lord himself. "To you shall I offer my invocation and prayers as you readily appear in response to our call. To your devotees you are like a fountain in the desert, Oh ancient sovereign Agni" (S.69). "Like men troubled by the blazing heat of the sun, taking refuge under the shade of a tree we have approached you, Oh Agni. You look lustrous like gold" (S.70). Another sage addresses Agni with the same confidence but with a touch of agnostic feeling. "That omniscient and adorable Agni brings to us treasures that are open as well as those that are hidden. As waves in a powerful water-fall are difficult to be crossed, so it is difficult to understand this holy Agni", says Sobhari Kāṇva" (S.71). The devotee looks upon his teacher as one who is bound to lead him homeward and unerringly show the treasures. What is meant by the word 'treasure' or the word, 'home'? Treasure means spiritual bliss or Ātmānanda. The master initiates the disciple into a life that takes him to bliss, and to his real home—which is God. Jñāneśvara has characterised the highest station to be aimed at, as मूळघर or the original home. The teacher does not merely direct the way, but actually takes him there. "Oh Pūṣan, conduct us to that learned one who will initiate and reveal to us the celestial wealth. Let us have the company of Pūṣan who will be our pilot and take us to our homes"

(S.72). Will not the darkness wear away when we reach home, sweet home? Or, "Oh Agni, provide us with a resting place which will be our real refuge. You are the deity who will steer our way" (S.73). The sense of indebtedness weighs down a pupil to surrender. "Pay your respects to that great Indra, whose grace enabled our forefathers, the Āngirasas, to find the sure way to the Godhead" (S.74). "Agni is my father, brother and my kin. He is my steadfast friend. As people worship the radiant orb of the sun, so do we broadcast our prayer-notes" (S.75). No true student will ever want to be separated from his teacher. "Like a horse yoked to a chariot, deliberately have I joined myself to the pole from which I never seek disentanglement. He who knows the path is guiding me and he will carry me straight to my destiny" (S.76). "I shall never exchange you Oh Indra, the wielder of thunderbolt; I shall never exchange you for a price, not even for thousands of silver pieces. You yourself are an invaluable treasure and I cannot sell you even if I get a rich fund in return", vows Pragātha Kāṇva (S.77). Incidentally, this reminds us of a similar expression by that famous pilgrim, Bunyan. "A voice would exclaim within him " Sell Him, Sell Him, Sell Him, but Bunyan replied "I will not, I will not, for ten thousands of worlds."[1] It is astonishing to note how a man's baser emotions refuse to be rinsed clean even when he is blessed with some spiritual experiences. His passions entice him at moments and try to charm him away from a life in God. The very fact that the alluring voice came from within Bunyan's mind signifies that it is nothing but the solicitation of flesh, the bait of desires, witchery of man's own lower self. But the mystic who has a firm grip over God will not part with Him or with his spiritual teacher even at the cost of his life.

6. Desire to serve the Master. The next point which will engage our attention is the earnest desire of the disciple to serve his master. We may note here how roots of ideas developed after a lapse of centuries are found in the Vedas, how a simple suggestion thrown by means of a word has been exfoliated by later thinkers or how disregarding the words and stray ideas, the implication of a Mantra

1 Quoted in 'Mysticism in Maharashtra' by R.D. Ranade, Aryabhushan Press, Pune, 1933, P. 487

is grasped and shaped into a doctrine in ages to come. We shall consider here a group of verses which together provide a basis for the Gītā verse:

तद्विद्धि प्रणिपातेन परिप्रश्नेन सेवया।
उपदेक्ष्यन्ति ते ज्ञानं ज्ञानिनः तत्त्वदर्शिनः।। (IV. 34)

(Learn this by humble obeisance, by enquiry and service. The learned, who have visualised the Truth, will impart this divine knowledge to you). It is no wonder that the Vedic seers salute Agni and other gods oft and on. They had to take a submissive attitude before the forces of nature. Moreover, Agni was of tremendous use both for cooking food and for getting warmth. From a great number of psalms which speak of bowing before the deities, and especially Agni, we gather an impression that the Vedic people were always on their knees! Let us see how this attitude of Praṇipāta or saluting is exemplified in many a verse. "He it is who is dear and who eminently deserves to be approached and who has become the priest at the sacrifices. Oh Agni, you are shining in your habitation, we salute you. We go on our knees with reverence and go near you" (S.78). "The devotees along with their spouses bended their knees as a mark of surrender to that adorable Agni. They worshipped Agni with their bodies emaciated by penance and won his friendship" (S.79). The sages are in a pliant mood, no doubt; but it is equally important that Agni by his own superiority commands that frame of mind. Agni, the teacher, has an overwhelming personality which naturally results in the disciple becoming very humble before him. He who stands on a high pedestal is looked up to as a leader; and he that stands on a low ground, becomes a follower. The mode of relationship between them is called the ascendance-submission relationship and is typical of the teacher-disciple bond. The disciple's eyes are as if dazzled by the splendour of the teacher. "The seers are awe-inspiring (घोर). We salute them. Their eyes and mind are full of truth. To you, who are an architect of the universe, we pay homage; protect us" (S.80). The greatness of Agni is said to lie not in his external appearance, but in his truthfulness. After all, it is the quality of the mind and not the outward impressiveness that

determines one's excellence. As there is Praṇipāta (salutation), so there is Paripraśna (a spirit of enquiry) too! "Ask Agni himself, for He is coming along. He knows all, He is omniscient. Encomiums are addressed to Him. He is the overlord of all laws, all sacrifices, all powers and all valours. He is a sovereign of the brave" (S.81). Consequently he alone will be in a position to satisfy the curiosity of the enquirer. Asking questions and giving answers is not a simple affair in spiritual matters. As the teacher must be fortified by spiritual knowledge, the student must have cultivated virtues. An unbreakable bond will be established only between such minds. "If any query is to be made, one has to go to Agni. But this task must be undertaken only by a proper person. Only a sage can reveal his own mind to the Fire-god. He listens to each and every word of Agni with modesty and seeks protection from Agni's righteousness" (S.82). In the wake of Paripraśna follows Sevā (service). "Serve that Agni before whom the sinful tremeble. He bestows thousands of gifts. Look upon that service as an aid to your worshipful meditation and serve him whole-heartedly" (S.83). "Your glory knows no bounds, you are an embodiment of ancient wisdom. To you, who are ablaze, the devotees with illumined intellects, render service" (S.84). "We are ignorant, no doubt, but we serve the wise Agni. He has a delightful form. Let him talk to the gods about our oblations" (S.85). The aspirant is always eager to get initiated at the hands of a great spiritual teacher; for, by that he turns a corner on his Godward journey. Perhaps he had been treading a wrong path or taking a detour. Per chance he was stranded at cross-roads. At such times the teacher holds his hand and brings him on to the royal road to divinity. Hence the eagerness of an aspirant to be under the tutelege of a magnanimous soul. " I beg of you to bestow on me valour and a word of wisdom on which I would meditate; with its strength you blessed Yati. Bhṛgu and Praskaṇva had gathered that fortune" prays Medhyātithi Kāṇva (S.86). "By your grace all the four corners of the mind get illumined. Pray, teach me. This docile child craves for enlightenment. We will fill the air with praises and will inhabit a dwelling which is rich with bounties received from you" (S.87). We thus see that the spiritual teacher is looked upon as helping his disciple in matters worldly, and in matters, spiritual. If a disciple

is sincere in his devotional pursuits the teacher guarantees him material welfare also. That is why Agni is requested to grant both these wealths. The Vedic people cared for fullness of life; but spiritual progress was their prime objective. Thus we read: "Hasten to us, Oh Agni, and be a priest at the sacrifice. May the whole of heaven and earth serve you. Carry our worship to gods so that our minds become pure" (S.88). Or, "You are omniscient, O Lord of all wealth. You know the right direction. Pray guide me. You are the presiding deity of all ancient learning. Kindly instruct me" (S.89).

7. Spiritual Heritage. We now pass on to the next point, that of the importance of spiritual heritage. What we inherit—physiologically, psychologically, economically, socially, morally or spiritually is the runway of our flight. Those with a rich heritage get a smooth take off. Some aspirants may make boundless progress. Some may remain at almost the starting-point, others may deteriorate; that all depends on their own determination and effort. If one belongs to a tradition, a part of preliminary discipline is cultivated without any hardship. A carpenter's son knows how to handle a saw without being taught. The function which habit performs in an individual's life is performed by tradition in an institution. We may refer to the wonderful assistance we receive from our habits in our daily life. It is impossible to improve upon William James in this regard and we may summarise his account for our purpose.[1] Habit, he says, simplifies the movements required to achieve a given result, makes them more accurate and diminishes fatigue. We need not think over the performance for it becomes automatic. We just follow the habit. Our conscious attention is not demanded as routine is followed almost mechanically. The brain need not strain itself every time, as many actions are relegated to the lower centres. Without much effort the movements go on in a regular manner. A fully fashioned character where habits are ingrained will be very efficient. James' observations are applicable to an institution where traditions and customs are well-built. There is no new thinking on every occasion; tracks are laid, actions roll on, and duties are carried out

1 The Principles of Psychology, Vol.I, Dover Publication, Inc. 920 Broadway, New York 10, 1950, Pp. 112 ff.

unknowingly. If an aspirant is born in such a society or is initiated into such a spiritual lineage, he has innumerable advantages. In Vedic times, for example, such a person would be familiar with the materials and methods of performing various sacrifices, the Mantras to be uttered, the amount of time to be given to different rituals and so on. In a spiritual line the modes of prayer or worship, the method of meditation, the devotional songs to be sung, are all handed over ready-made to the disciple. What is most important, however, is the strength and the backing of the power with which the atmosphere is surcharged. The disciple follows the footsteps of the teacher. Such a bond is a result of meditation of all the great realised souls belonging to the school. The merit earned by them is the sturdy psychological, moral and spiritual backbone of the whole heirarchy. "Ṛṣi Atharvan was the pioneer path-finder, he prepared the way by means of a sacrifice. After him the law-abiding sun-god was born. Then Uśanā Kāvya brought out the cows of light. We worship that immortal governor of the universe" (S.90). We read here how the tradition was built by great seers coming in succession. We may note the significance of the three names mentioned in this Ṛk. Atharvan is said to have first brought down fire from the heaven, offered Soma and recited prayers. He is also the one who learnt from Brahmā and then taught the Brahmavidyā. So he is the beginner of a mode of worship as well as an early teacher of mankind. Now it is clear that the rules set out by him will have to be practised. Who but the sun-god, the mighty strider, can do it rigorously? So he is mentioned next. He, as if, strengthens the rules by practising them. Rules and regulations, laws and injunctions atrophy if they are not put into practice. What is remarkable about the sun is his unhampered performance of duty. Next the name of Uśanā Kāvya is found. Uśanā or Śukra is a very wise person who brought together theory and practice, for he is known as a writer on civil and religious law. Thus is a system perfected – a rule is set, it is practised and is theoretically justified. The importance of belonging to such a well-knit group can not be over-estimated. "Meditating intensely on your laws and strictly adhering to your injunctions, sages come to realise the seven heavenly streams and discover the way to unlock the doors leading unto divine treasures. The wise Saramā found out the infinite

expanse of light, which made it possible for humanity to bathe in the soft raindrops of God's mercy" (S.91). Ṛṣi Yajña Prājāpatya talks of seven god-men who had an intuitive apprehension of the way of the ancient seers (S.92). It is imperative that rule of law is kept unhampered. "Do not hesitate, run up, partake in the libation mixed with milk. Keep unbroken the thread of sacrifice which joins us to the times long, long past" (S.93). Requests to presiding deities not to snap the link are numerous.

8. Prayer for Grace. When a person takes a submissive role, the attitude culminates in surrender. This mental make-up is reflected in a number of verses, an assorted bunch of which may be considered. First of all the disciple wishes to welcome the deities at his place. "You have been kindled, Oh Agni, please escort gods to the house of the patron who is waiting in all eagerness to offer gifts" (S.94). Grace is expected to come from all quarters. As such a galaxy of divine beings is invited. Agni is extolled as the first functionary so far as the institution of Yajña is concerned. "You first stood before Mātariśvan and Vivasvān for the sake of a sacrifice. When the heavens and the earth trembled, you bore that calamity and saw the worship through" (S.95). "Oh Aświns, come to us just as you have been going to Vivasvān for partaking Soma juice, or just as you have been visiting Manu" (S.96). In order to prove himself to be an honourable host, he talks highly of his own connections. "The sages Dadhyaṅ, Angiras, Priyamedha, Kaṇva, Atri and Manu know my family. My ancesters belong to the fraternity of holy men; they in turn are associated with a divine lineage. I praise Agni and Indra in a manner observed by them and bow to them" (S.97). Looking on himself as a dutiful and deserving disciple, he addresses a league of gods. "Destroyers of adversaries, Oh three and thirty deities, your patriarch is Manu himself. I pay my respects to you. Be pleased to guard us closely. Keep us in touch with Manu" (S.98).

So intense is the desire of the seeker to be blessed, that instead of waiting for the multitude of the celestial personages to be pleased, he turns to the good old friend, Agni. "Protect us from all the hostile demons and fortify us in our struggle for plenitude. You are the

nearest among gods and a trusted friend. I pray to you alone", runs a poem by Bharga Prāgātha (S.99). Another Mantra reads: "Oh Agni, you are one with Varuṇa and Mitra. You love the devotee who abides by the ancient law with deep faith. In the end he receives your grace" (S.100). The disciple knows that it is impossible to reach the final goal by himself. Well might he display rectitude in his behaviour in sticking to the moral path, but the denouement of the whole performance depends on grace. "Let our path be easy to traverse and let it be full of bounties. With you by our side, our fortune will flower, do not forsake us, Oh Agni, take us under your wings" (S.101).

The spiritual journey is not all that smooth. The outside world is filled with attractive objects and enticing temptations. The inside world is fraught with lustful passions and seductive vices. The lone walker on this road — and every one has to walk alone — is frightened and longs for a safe conduct. He therefore needs invulnerability and begs a boon from Agni. "Oh Agni, you can oversee the universe. Be kind to me. Guard me against dangers from all the four quarters with the power of your wisdom. You are immortal, I am your friend; bestow a long life on me" (S.102). "Oh Lord of prowess, we entirely depend upon you for support just as old and infirm men always depend upon a staff. We pray you to be with us" (S.103). The sages know that what they have undertaken, is an uphill task and hence they have to requisition a good deal of energy and enthusiasm. They therefore prefer an appeal to the deities for vigour. "This is our petition to you; cover us by your grace and save us from sins. Burn all evil in the world. Grant us vitality and make us self-sufficient" (S.104). Thus an aspirant wants support from his teacher, but he equally wants to put in effort himself. What is really wonderful is his assurance to the teacher that he will not transgress the moral code laid down for him. "Oh Indra, remove all dangers from our way; for we are firm in our resolve to follow this course of Soma sacrifice" (S.105). What does a spiritual teacher expect from his disciples if not such steadfastness?

SOURCES-V

1. न दक्षिणा वि चिकिते न सव्या न प्राचीनमादित्या नोत पश्चा।
पाक्या चिद् वसवो धीर्या चिद् युष्मानीतो अभयं ज्योतिरश्याम्।। ऋग्वेद II.27.11

2. को अद्धा वेद क इह प्र वोचद् देवान् अच्छा पथ्या का समेति।
ददृश्र एषामवमा सदांसि परेषु या गुह्येषु व्रतेषु।। ऋग्वेद III.54.5

3. आ देवानामपि पन्थामगन्म यच्छक्नवाम तदनु प्रवोळ्हुम।
अग्निर्विद्वान् त्स यजात् सेदु होता सो अध्वरान् त्स ऋतून् कल्पयाति।। ऋग्वेद X.2.3

4. इदं जनासो विदथ महद् ब्रह्म वदिष्यति।
न तत् पृथिव्यां नो दिवि येन प्राणंति वीरुधः।। अथर्ववेद I.32.1

5. ऋषिः दर्शनात्। 'स्तोमान् ददर्श' इति औपमन्यवः। 'तद् यद् एनान् स्तपस्यमानान् ब्रह्म स्वयंभु अभ्यानर्षत्। तद् ऋषीणां ऋषित्वम्' इति विज्ञायते।। निरुक्त II.11

6. अजान् ह वै पृश्नीन् स्तपस्यमानान् ब्रह्म स्वयंभु अभ्यानर्षत।
ते ऋषयो अभवन् तद् ऋषीणां ऋषित्वम्।। तैत्तिरीय आरण्यक II.9

7. ते यत् पुराऽस्मात् सर्व्वस्मात् इदं इच्छंतः श्रमेण तपसाऽऽरिषं स्तस्मात् ऋषयः।। शतपथ ब्राह्मण VI.1.1.1

8. साक्षात्कृत धर्माणः ऋषयो बभूवुः। ते अवरेभ्यः असाक्षात्कृत धर्मभ्यः उपदेशेन मंत्रान् संप्रादुः।। निरुक्त I.20

9. पवस्व सोम देववीतये वृषेन्द्रस्य हार्दि सोमधानमा विश।
पुरा नो बाधादुरिताति पारय क्षेत्रविद्धि दिश आहा विपृच्छते।। ऋग्वेद IX.70.9

10. इमामग्ने शरणिं मीमृषो न इममध्वानम् यमगामदूरात्।
आपिः पिता प्रमतिः सोम्यानां भृमिः असि ऋषिकृन् मर्त्यानाम्।। ऋग्वेद I.31.16

11. हृणीयमानो अप हि मदैयेः प्र मे देवानां व्रतपा उवाच।
इंद्रो विद्वान् अनु हि त्वा चचक्ष तेनाहमग्ने अनुशिष्ट आगाम्।। ऋग्वेद V.2.8

12. निधीयमानं अपगूळ्हं अप्सु प्र मे देवानां व्रतपा उवाच।
इंद्रो विद्वान् अनु हि त्वा चचक्ष, तेनाहं अग्ने अनुशिष्ट आगाम्।।
अक्षेत्रवित् क्षेत्रविदं हि अप्राट्, स प्रैति क्षेत्रविदानुशिष्टः।
एतद् वै भद्रं अनुशासनस्य, उत श्रुतिं विंदत्यञ्जसीनाम्।। ऋग्वेद X.32.6,7

13. ब्रह्मणे ब्राह्मणं क्षत्राय राजन्यं मरुद्भयो वैश्यं
तपसे शूद्रं तमसे तस्करम्।
नारकाय वीरहणं पाप्मने क्लीबमाक्रयाया अयोगूं
कामाय पूंश्चलूं अतिकृष्टाय मागधम्।। यजुर्वेद XXX.5

14. अग्निः कस्मात् ? अग्रणीः भवति, अग्रं यज्ञेषु प्रणीयते।। निरुक्त VII.14

15. अग्ने प्रेहि प्रथमो देवयतां चक्षुर्देवानामुत मर्त्यानाम्।
इयक्षमाणा भृगुभिः सजोषाः स्वर्यन्तु यजमानाः स्वस्ति।। यजुर्वेद XVII.69

16. त्वमग्ने यज्ञानां होता विश्वेषां हितः। देवेभिर्मानुषे जने।। ऋग्वेद VI.16.1

17. यत्र ब्रह्मविदो यांति दीक्षया तपसा सह।
अग्निः मा तत्र नयतु अग्निर्मेधा दधातु मे अग्नये स्वाहा।। अथर्ववेद XIX.43.1

18. नीयते अयं नृभिर्यस्मात्, नयति अस्मात् असौ च तम्।
तेनेमौ चक्रतुः कर्म सनामानौ पृथक् पृथक्।। बृहद्देवता I.91

19. ऋतावानं महिषं विश्वदर्शतं अग्निं सुम्नाय दधिरे पुरोजनाः।
श्रुत्कर्णं सप्रथस्तमं त्वा गिरा दैव्यं मानुषा युगा।। ऋग्वेद X.140.6

20. अधा होता न्यसीदो यजीयानिळस्पद इषयन्नीड्यः सन्।
तं त्वा नरः प्रथमं देवयंतो महो राये चितयंतो अनुग्मन्।। ऋग्वेद VI.1.2

21. य ईं चिकेत गुहा भवंतम् आ यः ससाद धारामृतस्य।
वि ये चृतंत्यृता सपंत आदिद् वसूनि प्र ववाचास्मै।। ऋग्वेद I.67.4

22. स हि शर्धो न मारुतं तुविष्वणिरप्नस्वतीपूर्वरास्विष्टनिरार्तनासु इष्टनिः।
आदत् हव्यानि आददिः यज्ञस्य केतुः अर्हणा।
अध स्मास्य हर्षतो हृषीवतो विश्वे जुषंत पंथाम् नरः शुभे न पंथाम्।। ऋग्वेद I.127.6

23. वेधा अदृप्तो अग्निर्विजानन्नूधर्न गोनां स्वाद्मा पितूनाम्।
जने न शेव आहूर्यः सन् मध्ये निषत्तो रण्वो दुरोणे।। ऋग्वेद I.69.2

24. त इद् देवानां सधमाद आसन्नृतावानः कवयः पूर्व्यासः।
गूळ्हं ज्योतिः पितरो अन्वविंदन् त्सत्यमंत्रा अजनयन्नुषासम्।।
समान ऊर्वे अधि संगतासः सं जानते न यतंते मिथस्ते।
ते देवानां न मिनंति व्रतान्यमर्धंतो वसुभिर्यादमानाः।। ऋग्वेद VII.76.4,5

25. स ईं मृगो अप्यो वनर्गुः उपत्वचि उपमस्यां नि धायि।
वि अब्रवीत् वयुना मर्त्येभ्यः अग्निर्विद्वान् ऋतचित् हि सत्यः।। ऋग्वेद I.145.5

26. ऋतं शंसंतः ऋजु दीध्याना दिवस्पुत्रासः असुरस्य वीराः।
विप्रं पदं अंगिरसो दधाना यज्ञस्य धाम प्रथमं मनंत।। ऋग्वेद X.67.2

27. समानं नीळं वृषणो वसानाः सं जग्मिरे महिषा अर्वतीभिः।
ऋतस्य पदं कवयो नि पांति गुहा नामानि दधिरे पराणि।। ऋग्वेद X.5.2

28. एता विश्वा विदुषे तुभ्यं वेधो नीथानि अग्ने निण्या वचांसि।
निवचना कवये काव्यानि अशंसिषं मतिभिर्विप्र उक्थैः।। ऋग्वेद IV.3.16

29. कथा दाशेमाग्नये कास्मै देवजुष्टोच्यते भामिने गीः।
यो मर्त्येषु अमृत ऋतावा होता यजिष्ठ इत् कृणोति देवान्।।

यो अध्वरेषु शंतम ऋतावा होता तमू नमोभिरा कृणुध्वम्।
अग्निः यद् वेर्मर्ताय देवान् त्स चा बोधाति मनसा यजाति।।

स हि क्रतुः स मर्यः स साधुर्मित्रो न भूदद्भुतस्य रथीः।
तं मेधेषु प्रथमं देवयंतीर्विश उप ब्रुवते दस्ममारीः।।

स नो नृणां नृतमो रिशादा अग्निर्गिरोऽवसा वेतु धीतिम्।
तना च ये मघवानः शविष्ठा वाजप्रसूता इषयंत मन्म।।

एवाग्निर्गोतमेभिर्ऋतावा विप्रेभिरस्तोष्ट जातवेदाः।
स एषु द्युम्नं पीपयत् स वाजं स पुष्टिं याति जोषमा चिकित्वान्।।
ऋग्वेद I.77.1, 2, 3, 4, 5

30. उत नः सुद्योत्मा जीराश्वो होता मन्द्रः शृणवच्चन्द्ररथः।
स नो नेषन्नेषतमैरमूरो ऽ ग्निर्वामं सुवितं वस्यो अच्छ।। ऋग्वेद I.141.12

31. अग्नेः सांतपनस्याहम् आयुषे पदमा रभे।
अद्धातिर्यस्य पश्यति धूममुद्यंतमास्यतः।। अथर्ववेद VI.76.2

32. अग्निर्जाता देवानामग्निर्वेद मर्तानामपीच्यम्।
अग्निः स द्रविणोदा अग्निर्द्वारा व्यूर्णुते स्वाहुतो नवीयसा नभंतामन्यके समे।।
ऋग्वेद VIII.39. 6

33. शिशुर्वै आंगिरसो मंत्रकृतां मंत्रकृत् आसीत्।
स अध्यापयन् पितॄन् पुत्रक इति आमंत्रयत्।
तं पितरो अब्रुवन् अधर्मं करोषि यो नः पितॄन् सतः
पुत्रक इति आमंत्रयसे। सो अब्रवीत् अहं वाव पिता
यो मंत्रकृत् अस्मि इति। ते देवेषु अपृच्छंत। ते देवा
अब्रुवन् एष वाव पिता यो मंत्रकृत् इति। तद्वै सोदजयत्।। ताण्ड्य ब्राह्मण XIII.3.24

34. पूर्वो जातो ब्रह्मणो ब्रह्मचारी घर्मं वसानस्तपसोदतिष्ठत्।
तस्मात् जातं ब्राह्मणं ब्रह्म ज्येष्ठं देवाश्च सर्वे अमृतेन साकम्।। अथर्ववेद XI.5.5

35. प्र तद्वोचेदमृतं नु विद्वान् गंधर्वो धाम विभृतं गुहा सत्।
त्रीणि पदानि निहिता गुहास्य यस्तानि वेद स पितुः पिता सत्।। यजुर्वेद XXXII.9

36. यो धर्ता भुवनानां यः उस्राणां अपीच्या वेद नामानि गुह्या।
स कविः काव्या पुरु रूपं द्यौरिव पुष्यति नभन्तामन्यके समे।। ऋग्वेद VIII.41.5

37. अस्वप्नजस्तरणयः सुशेवाः अतंद्रासोऽवृका अश्रमिष्ठाः।
ते पायवः सध्र्यंचो निषद्याऽग्ने तव नः पांत्वमूर।। ऋग्वेद IV.4.12

38. पृतनाजितं सहमानमग्निमुक्थैर्हवामहे परमात्सधस्थात्।
स नः पर्षदति दुर्गाणि विश्वा क्षामद्देवोऽति दुरितान्यग्निः।। अथर्ववेद VII.63.1

39. त्वमग्ने सुहवो रण्व संदृक् सुदीति सूनो सहसो दिदीहि।
मा त्वे सचा तनये नित्य आ धङ्मा वीरो अस्मन्नर्यो वि दासीत्।। ऋग्वेद VII.1.21

40. कस्ते जामिर्जनानामग्ने को दाश्वध्वरः। कोह कस्मिन् असि श्रितः।।
त्वं जामिर्जनानामग्ने मित्रो असि प्रियः। सखा सखिभ्य ईड्यः।। ऋग्वेद I.75.3, 4

41. एतम् सधस्थ परि ते ददामि यमावहाच्छेवधिं जातवेदाः।
अन्वागन्ता यज्ञपतिर्वो अत्र तं स्म जानीत परमे व्योमन्।। यजुर्वेद XVIII.59

42. न वो गुहा चकृम भूरि दुष्कृतं नाविष्ट्यं वसवो देवहेळनम्।
माकिर्नो देवा अनृतस्य वर्पस आ सर्वतातिमदितिं वृणीमहे।। ऋग्वेद X.100.7

43. वेत्था हि निर्ऋतीनां वज्रहस्त परिवृजम्।
अहरहः शुन्ध्युः परिपदामिव।। ऋग्वेद VIII.24.24

44. अग्निः शुचिव्रततमः शुचिर्विप्रः शुचिः कविः। शुची रोचत आहुतः।। ऋग्वेद VIII.44.21

45. त्वमग्ने वृजिनवर्तनिं नरं सक्मन् पिपर्षि विदथे विचर्षणे।
यः शूरसाता परितक्म्ये धने दभ्रेभिश्चित् समृवा हंसि भूयसः।।
इमां अग्ने शरणिं मीमृषो न इमं अध्वानं यमगाम दूरात्।
आपिः पिता प्रमतिः सोम्यानां भृमिः असि ऋषिकृन् मर्त्यानाम्।।
एतेनाग्ने ब्रह्मणा वावृधस्व शक्ती वा यत् ते चकृमा विदा वा।
उत प्र णेषि अभिवस्यो अस्मान् त्सं नः सृज सुमत्या वाजवत्या।। ऋग्वेद I.31.6, 16, 18

46. सो अग्र एना नमसा समिद्धोऽच्छा मित्रं वरुणमिन्द्रं वोचेः।
यत् सीमागश्चकृमा तत् सु मृळ तदर्यमादितिः शिश्रथन्तु।। ऋग्वेद VII.93.7

47. यद्वो देवाश्चकृम जिह्वया गुरु मनसो वा प्रयुती देवहेळनम्।
अरावा यो नो अभि दुच्छुनायते तस्मिन् तदेनो वसवो निधेतन।। ऋग्वेद X.37.12

48. अयं कविरकविषु प्रचेता मर्तेष्वग्निरमृतो नि धायि।
स मा नो अत्र जुहुरः सहस्वः सदा त्वे सुमनसः स्याम।। ऋग्वेद VII.4.4

49. अग्निमस्तोष्यृग्मियमग्निमीळा यजध्यै।
अग्निर्देवाँ अनक्तु न उभे हि विदथे कविरन्तश्चरति दूत्यं नभन्तामन्यके समे।।
ऋग्वेद VIII.39.1

50. त्वं नो अग्न आयुषु त्वं देवेषु पूर्व्य वस्व एक इरज्यसि।
त्वामापः परिस्रुतः परि यंति स्वसेतवो नभंतामन्यके समे।। ऋग्वेद VIII.39.10

51. यदंग दाशुषे त्वमग्ने भद्रं करिष्यसि। तवेत्तत् सत्यमंगिरः।।
स नः पितेव सूनवे अग्ने सूपायनो भव। सचस्वा नः स्वस्तये ।। ऋग्वेद I.1.6, 9

52. अग्निरिद्धि प्रचेता अग्निर्वेधस्तम ऋषिः।
अग्निं होतारमीळते यज्ञेषु मनुषो विशः।। ऋग्वेद VI.14.2

53. तवाग्ने होत्रं तव पोत्रमृत्वियं तव नेष्ट्रं त्वमग्निदृतायतः।
तव प्रशास्त्रं त्वमध्वरीयसि ब्रह्मा चासि गृहपतिश्च नो दमे।।
यस्तुभ्यमग्ने अमृताय मर्त्यः समिधा दाशदुत वा हविष्कृति।
तस्य होता भवसि यासि दूत्यमुप ब्रूषे यजस्यध्वरीयसि।। ऋग्वेद X.91.10, 11

54. अग्ने नय सुपथा राये अस्मान् विश्वानि देव वयुनानि विद्वान्।
युयोध्यस्मज्जुहुराण मेनो भूयिष्ठां ते नमउक्तिं विधेम।। ऋग्वेद I.189.1

55. तपसा ये अनाधृष्यास्तपसा ये स्वर्ययुः।
तपो ये चक्रिरे महस्ताँश्चिदेवापि गच्छतात्।। ऋग्वेद X.154.2

56. प्रत्यग्निः उषसश्चेकितानः अबोधि विप्रः पदवीः कवीनाम्।
पृथुपाजा देवयद्भिः समिद्धः अप द्वारा तमसो वन्हिरावः।। ऋग्वेद III.5.1

57. तिस्रो यत् अग्ने शरदः त्वां इत् शुचिं घृतेन शुचयः सपर्यान्।
नामानि चित् दधिरे यज्ञियानि असूदयंत तन्वः सुजाताः।। ऋग्वेद I.72.1

58. गौरमीमेदनु वत्सं मिषन्तं मूर्धानं हिङ्ङ कृणोन्मातवा उ।
सृक्वाणं धर्ममभि वावशाना मिमाति मायुं पयते पयोभिः।। ऋग्वेद I.164.28

59. अपक्रामन् पौरुषेयाद् वृणानो दैव्यं वचः।
प्रणीतीरभ्यावर्तस्व विश्वेभिः सखिभिः सह।। अथर्ववेद VII.105.1

60. अहं गृभ्णामि मनसा मनांसि मम चित्तं अनु चित्तेभिरेत।
मम वशेषु हृदयानि वः कृणोमि मम यातं अनुवर्त्मान एत।। अथर्ववेद VI.94.2

61. ओते मे द्यावापृथिवी ओता देवी सरस्वती।
ओतौ म इंद्रश्चाग्निश्चध्र्यास्म इदं सरस्वति।। अथर्ववेद VI.94.3

62. उद्यानं ते पुरुष नावयानं जीवातुं ते दक्षतातिं कृणोमि।
आ हि रोहेममृतं सुखं रथमथ जिर्विर्विदथमा वदासि।।
मा गतानामा दीधीथा ये नयंति परावतम्।
आ रोह तमसो ज्योति रे ह्या ते हस्तौ रभामहे।। अथर्ववेद VIII.1.6, 8

63. इह ते असुः इह प्राणः इह आयुः इह ते मनः।
उत् त्वा निर्ऋत्याः पाशेभ्यः दैव्या वाचा भरामसि।। अथर्ववेद VIII.1.3

64. आहार्षं त्वाविदं त्वा पुनरागाः पुनर्नव।
सर्वाङ्ग सर्वं ते चक्षुः सर्वमायुश्च तेऽविदम्।। ऋग्वेद X.161.5

65. मर्माणि ते वर्मणा छादयामि सोमस्त्वा राजामृतेनानु वस्ताम्।
उरोर्वरीयो वरुणस्ते कृणोतु जयंतं त्वानु देवा मदंतु।। ऋग्वेद VI.75.18

66. यो नः स्वः अरणो यश्च निष्ठ्यो जिघांसति।
देवाः तं सर्वे धूर्वंतु ब्रह्म वर्म ममांतरम्।। ऋग्वेद VI.75.19

67. यो नः स्वः अरणो यश्च निष्ठ्यो जिघांसति।
देवाः तं सर्वे धूर्वंतु ब्रह्म वर्म ममांतरम्।।
शर्म वर्म ममांतरम्।। सामवेद 1872

68. उवाच मे वरुणो मेधिराय त्रिः सप्त नामाघ्न्या बिभर्ति।
विद्वान् पदस्य गुह्या न वोचद्युगाय विप्र उपराय शिक्षन्।। ऋग्वेद VII.87.4

69. प्र ते यक्षि प्र त इयर्मि मन्म भुवो यथा वंद्यो नो हवेषु।
धन्वन्निव प्रपा असि त्वमग्न इयक्षवे पूरवे प्रत्न राजन्।। ऋग्वेद X.4.1

70. उप च्छायामिव घृणेरगन्म शर्म ते वयं। अग्ने हिरण्य संदृशः।। ऋग्वेद VI.16.38

71. उदिता यो निदिता वेदिता वसु आ यज्ञियो ववर्तति।
दुष्टरा यस्य प्रवणे नोऊर्मयो धिया वाजं सिषासतः।। ऋग्वेद VIII.103.11

72. सं पूषन् विदुषा नय यो अञ्जसानुशासति। य एवेदमिति ब्रवत्।।
समु पूष्णा गमेमहि यो गृहाँ अभिशासति। इम एवेति च ब्रवत्।। ऋग्वेद VI.54.1, 2

73. अग्ने विवस्वदा भरास्मभ्यमूतये महे। देवो ह्यसि नो दृशे।। सामवेद 10

74. प्र वो महे महि नमो भरध्वमाङ्गूष्यं शवसानाय साम।
येना नः पूर्वे पितरः पदज्ञा अर्चन्तो अङ्गिरसो गा अविन्दन्।। ऋग्वेद I.62.2

75. अग्निं मन्ये पितरमग्निमापिमग्निं भ्रातरं सदमित् सखायम्।
अग्नेरनीकं बृहतः सपर्यं दिवि शुक्रं यजतं सूर्यस्य।। ऋग्वेद X.7.3

76. हयो न विद्वान् अयुजि स्वयं धुरि तां वहामि प्रतरणीमवस्युवम्।
नास्या वश्मि विमुचं नावृतं पुनर्विद्वान् पथः पुरएत ऋजु नेषति।। ऋग्वेद V.46.1

77. महे चन त्वां अद्रिवः परा शुल्काय देयाम्।
न सहस्राय न अयुताय वज्रिवो न शताय शतामघ।। ऋग्वेद VIII.1.5

78. सपर्येण्यः स प्रियो विक्ष्वग्निर्होता मन्द्रो नि षसादा यजीयान्।
तं त्वा वयं दम आ दीदिवांसमुप ज्ञु बाधो नमसा सदेम।। ऋग्वेद VI.1.6

79. संजानाना उप सीदन् अभिज्ञु पत्नीवंतो नमस्यं नमस्यान्।
रिरिक्वांसः तन्वः कृण्वत स्वाः सखा सख्युर्निमिषि रक्षमाणाः।। ऋग्वेद I.72.5

80. घोरा ऋषयो नमो अस्तु एभ्यः चक्षुर्यदेषां मनसश्च सत्यम्।
बृहस्पतये महिष द्युमन्नमो विश्वकर्मन् नमस्ते पाहि अस्मान्।। अथर्ववेद II.35.4

81. तं पृच्छता स जगामा स वेद स चिकित्वान् ईयते सा न्वीयते।
तस्मिन् त्संति प्रशिषः तस्मिन्निष्टयः स वाजस्य शवसः शुष्मिणस्पतिः।।
ऋग्वेद I.145.1

82. तमित् पृच्छंति न सिमो वि पृच्छति स्वेनेव धीरो मनसा यत् अग्रभीत्।
न मृष्यते प्रथमं नापरं वचो अस्य क्रत्वा सचते अप्रदृपितः।। ऋग्वेद I.145.2

83. यस्माद्रेजन्त कृष्टयश्चर्कृत्यानि कृण्वतः।
सहस्रसां मेधसातावित्मनाऽग्निं धीभिः सपर्यत।। ऋग्वेद VIII.103.3

84. त्वमित् सप्रथा अस्यग्ने त्रातर्ऋतस्कविः।
त्वां विप्रासः समिधान दीदिव आ विवासन्ति वेधसः।। ऋग्वेद VIII.60.5

85. तं सुप्रतीकं सुदृशं स्वञ्चमविद्वांसो विदुष्टरं सपेम।
स यक्षद्विश्वा वयुनानि विद्वान् प्र हव्यमग्निरमृतेषु वोचत्।। ऋग्वेद VI.15.10

86. तत् त्वा यामि सुवीर्यं तद् ब्रह्म पूर्वचित्तये।
येना यतिभ्यो भृगवे धने हिते येन प्रस्कण्वमाविथ।। ऋग्वेद VIII.3.9

87. स तेजीयसा मनसा त्वोतः उत शिक्ष सु अपत्यस्य शिक्षोः।
अग्ने रायो नृतमस्य प्रभूतौ भूयाम ते सुष्टुतयश्च वस्वः।। ऋग्वेद III.19.3

88. एहि अग्ने इह होता नि षीदादब्धः सु पुरएता भवा नः।
अवतां त्वा रोदसी विश्वमिन्वे यजा महे सौमनसाय देवान्।। ऋग्वेद 1.76.2

89. विदा मघवन् विदा गातुमनुशंसिषो दिशः।
शिक्षा शचीनां पते पूर्वीणां पुरुवसो।। सामवेद 641

90. यज्ञैरथर्वा प्रथमः पथस्तते ततः सूर्यो व्रतपा वेन आजनि।
आ गा आजदुशना काव्यः सचा यमस्य जातममृतं यजामहे।। ऋग्वेद 1.83.5

91. स्वाध्यो दिव आ सप्त यह्वी रायो दुरो व्यृतज्ञा अजानन्।
विदत् गव्यं सरमा हळ्हमूर्वं येना नु कं मानुषी भोजते विट्।। ऋग्वेद 1.72.8

92. सहस्तोमाः सहछंदस आवृतः सहप्रमा ऋषयः सप्त दैव्याः।
पूर्वेषां पंथामनुदृश्य धीरा अन्वालेभिरे रथ्यो न रश्मीन्।। ऋग्वेद X.130.7

93. आ तू गहि प्र तु द्रव मत्स्वा सुतस्य गोमतः।
तन्तुं तनुष्व पूर्व्यं यथा विदे।। ऋग्वेद VIII.13.14

94. समिद्धो अग्न आ वह देवाँ अद्य यतस्रुचे।
तन्तुं तनुष्व पूर्व्यं सुतसोमाय दाशुषे।। ऋग्वेद I.142.1

95. त्वमग्ने प्रथमो मातरिश्वन आविर्भव सुक्रतूया विवस्वते।
अरेजेतां रोदसी होतृवूर्ये ऽ सघ्नोर्भारमयजो महो वसो।। ऋग्वेद I.31.3

96. वावसाना विवस्वति सोमस्य पीत्या गिरा।
मनुष्वच्छंभू आ गतम्।। ऋग्वेद I.46.13

97. दध्यङ् ह मे जनुषं पूर्वो अङ्गिराः प्रियमेधः कण्वो अत्रिर्गनुर्विदुस्ते मे पूर्वे मनुविदुः।
तेषां देवेष्वायतिरस्माकं तेषु नाभयः। तेषां पदेन मह्या नमे गिरेन्द्राग्नी आ नमे गिरा।।
ऋग्वेद 1.139.9

98. इति स्तुतासो असथा रिशादसो ये स्थ त्रयश्च त्रिंशच्च। मनोर्देवा यज्ञियासः।।
ते नस्त्राध्वं तेऽवत त उ नो अधि वोचत।
मा नः पथः पित्र्यान्मानवादधि दूरं नैष्ट परावतः।। ऋग्वेद VIII.30.2, 3

99. पाहि विश्वस्माद्रक्षसो अराव्णः प्र स्म वाजेषु नोऽव।
त्वामिद्धि नेदिष्ठं देवतातय आपिं नक्षामहे वृधे।। ऋग्वेद VIII.60.10

100. अग्ने स क्षेषदृतपा ऋतेजा उरु ज्योतिर्नशते देवयुष्टे।
ये त्वं मित्रेण वरुणः सजोषा देव पासि व्यजसा मर्तभोजः।। ऋग्वेद VI.3.1

101. सदा सुगः पितुमाँ अस्तु पन्था मध्वा देवा ओषधीः सं पिपृक्त।
भगो मे अग्ने सख्ये न मृध्या उद् रायो अश्यां सदनं पुरुक्षोः।। ऋग्वेद III.54.21

102. पश्चात् पुरस्तादधरादुदक्तात् कविः काव्येन परि पाहि राजन्।
सखे सखायमजरो जरिम्णेऽग्ने मर्तां अमर्त्यस्त्वं नः।। ऋग्वेद X.87.21

103. आ त्वा रंभं न जिव्रयो ररंभा शवसस्पते। उश्मसि त्वा सधस्थ आ।। ऋग्वेद VIII.45.20

104. ऊर्ध्वो नः पाहि अंहसो नि केतुना विश्वं समत्रिणं दह।
कृधी न ऊर्ध्वाञ्चरथाय जीवसे विदा देवेषु नो दुवः।। ऋग्वेद I.36.14

105. मा प्र गाम पथो वयं मा यज्ञादिन्द्र सोमिनः। मान्तः स्थुर्नो अरातयः।। ऋग्वेद X.57.1

CHAPTER VI

The Name of God

1. The Name as a Royal Road to God. Strife is the essence of the world and war is the father of all things; whatever is at war with itself, is bound to unite and that which breaks into fragments will come together, declares Herakleitos, the Greek philosopher. This gives the greatest assurance to all aspirants whose constant difficulty is that the mind runs in all directions and defies efforts at concentration. There are forces of our cupidities that keep the mind under their influence and make it pursue external objects. Be it as it may. There is also an opposite force of the divine element in us which tries to wean the mind from passions and lead it Godward. Thus there goes on a relentless war between these elements in us. But there need not be any cause for anxiety. What are passions after all? They are expressions of some energy. And while yet the energies are under the sway of the centrifugal force of sense and are turning away from God, a centripetal force of uttering the name of God, can be applied to bring them together and focus them on God. Thus out of the opposite tensions, as Herakleitos would say, there can be brought about a harmony.

The Vedic Ṛṣis have much to give us regarding the place of the name of God in spiritual life. We shall see how they deem the name to be the most important way to reach God and note the significance they have attached to speech. After taking a brief survey of characteristics of the name we shall look into the power of the name and its function of revealing God to man. The syllable Aum has a unique place in the process of meditation though other Mantras are not less efficacious. We shall then study the observation of the sages regarding time and place of meditation. Though the ideal is meditation purely for the love of God, man does expect some reward thereof. In the end we shall state how the name acts as a supreme joining force having its sway throughout the universe.

Once a devotee assiduously takes to the path of remembering the name of God, he develops a liking, nay, a craving for it. This gives rise to further devotion; and a deep attachment to the path results. The devotee's attention is drawn constantly to God and his mind is filled with love towards Him. If the devotee's resolve is firm he will not swerve from the path. His meditation will lead him directly to God-vision, for the name has a compulsive power to attract God. Sages and saints have moreover assured us that the name is not just an instrument leading to God; it enjoys the status of divinity itself. A significant tenet of the way of meditation is the identification of the name with God. Thus the name is enthroned by the seers all over the world; and it shines in its majestic repose. Constant utterance of the name brings peace to souls in anguish. Evil passions flee as the name takes root in the mind. If God is the sole object of attainment, uttering the name of God is the royal road thereof. The aspirant should consider the remembrance of the name of God as his bounden duty from which he can take no holiday. This helps him to re-channelise the energies of the senses towards God, because the name provides a link between his empirical self engrossed in the senses, and his spiritual self looking up to the Almighty.

2. Meditation by Means of Speech. "There are four types of speech. Only the learned know these. The first three are always kept hidden. It is with the fourth that man speaks" (S.1). The four kinds of speech are: Parā, Paśyantī, Madhyamā and Vaikharī. Mallinātha in his commentary on Kumāra-sambhava II.17 says:

वैखरी शब्दनिष्पत्तिः मध्यमा श्रुतिगोचरा।
द्योतितार्था च पश्यन्ती सूक्ष्मा वागनपायिनी।।

Vaikharī is articulated speech with all its stylistic characterisations like accent or meaning; Madhyamā is that stage where there is no production of sounds and which has no phonetic quality. It is subtle movement of the larynx or throat-throbbing; words are internalised. As it joins the gross and the subtle, it is termed Madhyamā. Paśyantī and Parā are not audible: Paśyantī is only suggestive while Parā is subtle and imperishable. The Pāṇinīya Śikṣā (II.6-8) gives an

excellent account of the articulation of words as under:

आत्मा बुद्ध्या समेतार्थान् मनो युंक्ते विवक्षया।
मनः कायाग्निमाहन्ति स प्रेरयति मारुतम् ।।
मारुतस्तूरसि चरन् मंद्रं जनयति स्वरम्।
सोदीर्णो मूर्ध्न्यभिहतो वक्त्रमापद्य मारुतः।
वर्णान् जनयते तेषां विभागः पंचधा स्मृतः ।।

(The individual soul (Atman) wishing to express something, sends orders through intellect (Buddhi) to the mind (Manas). The mind strikes at the body-fire (Kāyāgni) and the body-fire urges the vital wind (Māruta) and the vital wind, passing through the chest (Uras) generates sound-vibrations (Swaram). The sound vibrations rise up to the top of the head from inside (Mūrdhan) and strike on various spots in the mouth (Vaktṛ) thereby creating letters (Varṇān) which are divided into five categories). The parallels of four types of speech with four states of consciousness and with four types of self are also given in the technical treatment of the topic. Parā is said to be on a par with Turyāvasthā, or superconsciousness and is linked with the Atman. Paśyantī has its parallel in Suṣuptāvasthā or deep sleep and is related to the Kāraṇa-deha. Madhyamā is on a par with Svapnāvasthā or dream-state with its seat in the Sūkṣma-deha while Vaikharī has its correspondence with Jāgradavasthā or waking-state and belongs to Sthūla-deha. As regards meditation with the help of speech, we are told in the Ṛk quoted earlier, that a common man utters the name of God with Vaikharī or articulated speech; but only the wise know the first three types. As we go from Vaikharī to Madhyamā, from Madhyamā to Paśyantī and from Paśyantī to Parā, meditation becomes more and more internal. The name goes deeper and deeper into our very being — till at the level of Parā it becomes inseparable from the self. It is then de-linked from the gross body and its adjuncts, because the name is not transient like the gross body. The devotee who has realised God, may cast off his mortal coil, but the name which is imparted to him by his spiritual teacher and which enabled him to realise God, remains; so said the saint of Umadi. The undying quality of the highest form of speech is brought out in a couple of more Mantras. "Oh Virūpa, praise with

indestructible hymns the powerful Agni who protects devotees and who fulfils their desires" (S.2). Brahman is said to be the ultimate seat or the highest aim of speech when it attains to the same imperishable status as that of Brahman as per Ṛṣi Dīrghatamas Aucathya. "This altar is the limit of the earth, the sacrifice is the centre of the universe, Soma is the seed of the powerful horse and Brahman is the highest abode of speech" (S.3). The phrase Paramam Vyoma, which is a very common Vedic phrase for the abode of gods, indicates that it is the highest station aimed at.[1] Similar is the import of one more verse which says: "he who takes recourse to meditation on a Mantra which is the symbol of reality, reaches the highest" (S.4). The name of God is imbued with power and, therefore, "he who bears that sweet name of Indra, is able to kill his adversaries" (S.5). The word used is Bibharti (bears) which implies that the name abides with a devotee and acts as a sustaining and protective force. Purandaradāsa, the great Karnataka saint employs the term Nāmadhāraka for a person who is initiated into the spiritual path and who fortifies himself with the power of the name of God.

3. Characteristics of the Name. Uttering the name of God is the most popular advice of saints. The name is as simple as it is effective. The name is sweet and is widely known to be so. Names are innumerable though what is symbolized by these names, stands unique and peerless. "Oh Agni, you are omniscient, possessor of food, and immortal; you have many names. Oh inspirer of the world, fulfil the desires of your devotees and counter all crooked moves of the wicked" (S.6). "Agni who knows all the religious rites, has immortalised, in the form of Ṛbhus, the name which is beautiful by nature and which is praised by all. He protects the wealth in the world", observes Gāthina Viśwāmitra (S.7). The proliferation of the name has been described in a number of Mantras. "The master who showed the right path manifested himself at the dawns and made famous the names of Ādityas. The water deities remained silent before him, but ultimately, though going their separate ways, they came and joined him" (S.8). "Oh Indra, you were born in a yonder

1 R.E. Hume, The Thirteen Principal Upaniṣads, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1971, P.283, Note 2

country. You bear a name that is heard by a devotee when he is in all-absorbing meditation. Gods tremble before you through fear. You conquered the water which was controlled by the Dāsas" (S.9). Agni and Indra have taken a lead among those whose names are said to be very famous. "People adorned him while he was standing there. Bedecked by his own lustre and clothed in his own splendour, Indra moves throughout the universe. Mighty are the names of this valiant god. Taking various forms, he rules over the immortals" (S.10). What saves us, is the name of God; for it contains within itself the divine power. That power can thwart bad ideas and evil tendencies thus helping the mind to cleanse itself. "The glorious name of the Maruts, occupying the length and breadth of the world as the sea, is the only thing that is of any use like strength inherited from the forefathers" (S.11). It is mentioned that the name can bestow bliss on a devotee; and hence the devotee wishes to offer oblations to the name itself (S.12). Singing the praises of the Lord or His name is the first weapen in the armoury of seers. Ṛṣi Maitrāvaruṇi Vasiṣṭha speaks about the superabundant power of the name. "Viṣṇu conquered this vast universe thrice. Victory to the name of this primordial being" (S.13). "Oh you gods, you have been born from the earth, heavens and the mundane regions. All your names bearing your stamp and halo are praiseworthy. They command a worshipful attitude. Pray, listen to my call" (S.14).

We may enumerate a few more marks of the name. The name of the Lord is sweet, it is glorified, it is illuminating, it is sacred; and last but not the least, it is secret. Who has not heard about the sweetness of the name of God? "The experience of the beautiful form and the honey-like name of Apām Napāt grows without being known. Intense faith nourishes it. Again, it feeds on the illumination from above" (S.15). It may be mentioned that as born of clouds Agni is called Apām Napāt. This same spirit is reflected in the Bible. "After this manner, therefore, pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name".[1] And "Father, glorify thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven, *saying*, I have both glorified

1 St. Matthew VI. 9

it, and will glorify *it* again".[1] The charm of the name has been praised throughout the universe. "At the time of meditation, internal energy is released and the nectar gushes forth like a spring when the delicious name of the Lord is heard" (S.16). The lustrous name of Reality imparted by the spiritual teacher leads to the simultaneous experience of flavour and sound. The sonorous lines run: "Soma who bestows the gift of oratory, who initiates bravery, who cannot be attacked, who is lovable and sweet and who is a spokesman of the moral law, is being strained. He who strains Soma, gets a third name" (S.17). This third name is the secret name or hidden name. The first name is the popular name and the second is that which is given on the basis of the constellation at the time of birth. Now, the third name is no ordinary name. It radiates the brilliant heaven. It is a mystical name — known only to the teacher and the disciple. With this Indra illumines heaven and earth. Obtaining the divine name implies attainment of a great spiritual status. Further, we are told that the name of God is sacred and this sacredness adorns whatever it touches. "Your name dispels our doubts and clarifies our intellects. You yourself are the vital air which keeps us stable. Oh Indra, you are a protector, and will do us no harm. You are beyond the purview of sins. Your name is eternal truth... Armed with the psalms in which your name occurs, the devotee worships the sun. Caparisoned with your name and striving relentlessly he achieves whatever he desires" (S.18). "As the unborn, he has held the vast earth and has pillared the heaven on the strength of the pious words (Mantras), which are the very core of reality. Pray, guardedly follow the foot-prints of the cow of vision (vision of god). Oh Agni, you are the universal life, enter now into the mystery of mysteries" (S.19). Those who know it, keep it concealed, guard it in the heart of hearts and ardently meditate on it. "The enigmatic name to which the fear-stricken worlds take resort for evoking God's help is far far away. You held earth and heaven near each other and bestowed light on all human beings. Great is that unrevealed name which is earnestly sought after, and by the power of which you created all that existed and all that would come into existence. By its power,

1 St. John XII. 28

you also generated that ancient blissful light, wherein, Oh bounteous God, the five tribes whom you love, ultimately found refuge" (S.20).

Let us take another Mantra from Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa (S.21). In this अर्जुन is said to be the "secret name" (गुह्यं नाम). It is a hidden name in the sense that it is manifested to and heard by only seekers who have realised God. It is not revealed to common people. There are other names in the Vedas which are said to be निण्य (hidden), अपीच्य (secret) etc. in the sense of God-given Names." Unknown though the name is, its dignity is recognised; hence the desire to adore it. "As you know the secret names of gods, Oh Agni, kindly convey our prayerful offerings to them", sings Ṛṣi Vasuśruta Ātreya (S.22). The true nature of the name that fructifies, is known only to the Guru and to God. "Oh gods, you gifted a cow to the Āngirasas and it was milked by Aryamā. It is only he and I that know what that cow is" (S.23). Another stanza reiterates the real strength of the name. "Oh brave soul, the Maruts practise penance in order to attain to thy radiance. Your revelation is really reassuring, for you have won for yourself a permanent abode near Viṣṇu. That is why you are entitled to guard that secret royal name" (S.24).

4. The Import of Name. What is the real import of the name? What is it that makes it valuable? What is its significance due to? The answer to all the questions is one and the same: the uniqueness of the name lies in its potency or power to make God stand before the vision of the devotee. To reach the Godhead, one must utter His name, the ingredients of which show a positive polarity towards Him. The name imparted by the spiritual teacher, has a magnetic influence; because it shares in the spiritual achievements of the teacher. Even the remembrance of the spiritual teacher forms part of meditation; ऋषि अनुस्मरणमपि उपासनांगम् says Śamkara, while commenting on Taittirīya Upaniṣad I.5.1. Lingappa Sāvalgi, an ardent disciple of the saint of Umadi used to say: would not a repetition of the name of our spiritual teacher lead to the blissful spiritual experience? It is the name laden with authority to which the Vedic sage sticks with old-world sincerity. "The lord of prayer, Brahmaṇaspati, verily reveals the words of the sacred Mantra which

remains surcharged with the spiritual reign of gods — Indra, Varuṇa, Mitra, Aryamā and others. We will repeat the same blissful and immortal word in the assembly of saintly worshippers. If you too, Oh men, resort to this word, you will be able to achieve all priceless objects," confidently asserts the sage Kaṇva Ghaura (S.25). The adjective used for the name is Anehasam, incomparable or not liable to be injured. The name of God is peerless and immortal. There cannot be a parallelism between the name which has the potency to lead us to God (Sabīja Nāma) and the one which does not have it (Nirbīja Nāma). A valuable Mantra confers bliss (Sambhuvam). Obviously, there is no greater bliss than the vision of God. Madhva in his commentary on the Mantra, says that the name is uttered for the sake of knowledge or illumination and bliss (ज्ञानार्थं सुखकारणम्). The stress on knowledge and happiness is seen in another verse. "In your delightful habitation, may we abide by your side and acquire spiritual wealth and remain absorbed in meditation on your divine self, Oh Indra" (S.26).

It is not without hard labour that one receives such a divine name. As the Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa puts it: it is through hardships and penance that one comes across such a goddess of speech to whom libations are offered (S.27). This divine lady वाक् or name knits together God and the devotee. It is because of this power that the name becomes valuable. The Vedic Ṛṣis have not stopped at saying that the name of God is always turned to God as the magnetic needle is turned to the north pole; they have added that the really fruitful name is co-extensive with God Himself. It is non-different from God. "Fifteen types of the sacred reverential prayers (Uktha) will ever be chanted in thousands of places so long as the heaven and the earth exist. They all extol the lordship and suzerainty of the Lord. The word (Vāk) is co-extensive with the Lord (Brahman)" (S.28). In this the Vedas anticipate the Biblical idea: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God".[1] How can such a great name come to our hands unless we set our shoulder to the wheel? "By resorting to worship, the wise seekers arrived at

1 St. John I.1

the path of the Word. They found it harboured in the intuition of the sages. After realisation of that word they distributed it in many ways. It is the same word which is extolled in seven metres[1] in the Vedas (S.29). Weaving the name in music increases the duration of meditation. It also keeps the mind pinned down to the name.

5. Meditation, First, Foremost, Always. Fully conscious that the remembrance of God's name is the most efficacious way to God-realization, the Vedic seers remain absorbed in it. "Oh Maruts, you are a terror to the enemies, I call you with your lovable names. Be pleased with us" (S.30). "Those who are full of knowledge, whose minds are ever set on God, who speak truth, and who meditate on the name of God, a veritable wish-cow, can reach God" (S.31). We find from a Mantra of Ṛṣi Vatsa Kāṇva that knowledge, truthfulness and meditation are absolutely necessary for the attainment of God.

1 The principal metres (Chandas) are seven : Gayatrī, Triṣṭup, Anuṣṭup, Jagatī, Panktiḥ, Uṣṇik and Bṛhatī. The Atharvaveda gives a list of principal metres as follows : गायत्र्युष्णिगनुष्टुब्बृहतीपंक्तिस्त्रिष्टुब्जगत्यै। (XIX.21.1). The meters are also mentioned in Yajurveda XXIII.33-34. The ककुभ् as a metre is added to the list of the seven principal metres. There are some minor metres also. The number of hymns in those metres is very small. They are : शक्वरी, अतिशक्वरी, अष्टिः, अत्यष्टिः, धृतिः, अतिधृतिः, द्विपदाविराट्, अतिजगती, द्विपदागायत्री, द्विपदात्रिष्टुप्, द्विपदाजगती, एकपदाविराट् and एकपदात्रिष्टुप्.

The following details may be interesting :

Chanda	Mantra Sankhyā	Akṣara Sankhyā
Triṣṭup	4251	44
Gayatrī	2449	24
Jagatī	1346	48
Anuṣṭup	858	32
Panktiḥ	498	40
Uṣṇik	398	28
Bṛhatī	371	36
Dvipadā Virāt	139	20
Atyaṣṭi	82	68
Śakvarī	19	56
Dvipadā Triṣṭup	14	22
Atijagatī	17	52
Atiśakvarī	10	60

Likewise we read how the mortal man is engaged in prolonged meditation on the name of immortal God (S.32). Man is devoted to Agni and is engrossed in the contemplation on him (S.33). The devotee is like a child of God and loves to be fondled by Him. The seeker says: "Oh God, as a cow who gives plenty of milk, never leaves her calf, so too let not gods forsake us. We know that you love us as a father and therefore we request you to bestow happiness on us" (S.34). Then we come across a Mantra later made famous (with a little variation) by the Īśopaniṣad. The hymn is addressed to the mind of a person who is about to leave the body. "Let my vital force now attain the immortal air, let the body be reduced to ashes. Oh my mind, remember; remember the created world and remember all that has been done till now" (S.35). These are the memorable words of a great Ṛṣi. The dying man converses with his mind in a very touching manner. The word used for the mind is Kratu — that which desires. Śamkara in his commentary on his Mantra as occuring in the Īśopaniṣad explains Kratu as Samkalpātmaka, i.e. the mind which always plays with different ideas. It is now asked to do three things: (a) In the first place, the mind is asked to remember something important. What can it be that the desire-ridden mind should remember at the time of death? Śamkara says: स्मर यन्मम स्मर्तव्यं तस्य कालोऽयं प्रत्युपस्थितः (Remember what it is of utmost importance to remember; for, the appointed time has already arrived). The mind should first of all leave aside its nature of entertaining ideas, it should become Unmana i.e. it should transcend itself. This is implied by using the word, Kratū for the mind. "Oh mind", says the dying man, "I know your usual nature; but be good enough to leave it now, and remember the name of God". What else can be of more significance at the last moment? Even if the mind has avoided remembering God till death, it cannot afford to do so any more. At least at the last moment, it should rise to the occasion. (b) In the second place, the mind is asked to remember the created world (Klibe smara). "Remember, Oh mind, the world which you are now leaving. Has it offered to you anything worthwhile? Were you ever completely satisfied here? Had it been so, you would have long left your nature of craving for things. But you still jump from one object to another in order to gain permanent bliss. You never found

it, because you did not care to search the ground of this created world. You always mistook the ephemeral for the ultimate truth. Now that you are bidding adieu to this tantalising illusion, understand that it is illusory; hence, Oh mind, remember the world. (c) In the third place, the mind is asked to remember all that has been done so far (Kṛtam smara). Perhaps, up till now the mind has wandered aimlessly and shown only peripheral interest, if at all, in the practice of meditation. Understood in this sense the phrase, Kṛtam smara is a dying declaration which points an accusing finger towards the mind. "Oh mind, you are guilty upto this moment; you have no trace of devotion in you. But awaken at least at this final occasion and take the only chance of salvation by remembering Him. Hungry Time has taken a revenge on the body; the body does not help you, it is a hindrance. If your penitence is sincere, if you are prepared to dissolve yourself, you may still be saved. Remember, that you have always been way-ward till now, but you are offered one more opportunity. Make utmost efforts and break yourself free from the yoke of allurements. Do it, my mind, please do it". All this advice is for the mind which is truant. However, there is another possibility. The request to remember past deeds may be addressed to the mind of a pious man. It is never caught in a frenzy and as it has developed the habit of always remembering God, it is sure to remember Him at the hour of departure. Understood in this way the phrase Kṛtam smara is a morale booster. It means: "Remember as you have always remembered, meditate as you have always meditated, Oh mind. Do not falter at this critical juncture. Be firm. Let the habit of meditation which you have built up by long toil continue. Be tied to the name of God which has been your life-long routine and victory is yours. You have not given up meditation even in the midst of miseries of the world, so never retreat at this crucial time. Be courageous; remember what you have always remembered". Thus the Mantra contains three important ideas, namely, one should remember God at the time of death, one must realise the momentary nature of the world, and one should be penitent for errors of commission and omission. It is incumbent on an aspirant to remember God throughout his life if he is anxious to remember Him at the moment of death. This is the definitive principle of the

philosophy of meditation. The tenet is illustrated in Jñāneśwarī: "If you doubt, Oh Arjuna, as to how my devotee can sit for meditation when all his senses have half left him, when he is surrounded by miseries and when death stands face to face, remember that if the devotee has constantly remembered me, I become his servant at the time of his death" (VIII. 120-123). God sees that the devotee leaves this world with His name on the lips. This is the grand finale to the holy process of life-long meditation.

6. The Name as Bond between God and Man. By pious repetition of the Gāyatrī Mantra sins are expiated. "Savitṛ inspires the whole universe. We meditate on his indescribable lustre. Let that great one direct our intellects" (S.36). We have to note that the verse contains a prayer for God's grace, but it lays no less stress on the necessity of self-effort on the part of the devotee. In fact, God is to be appropriated by much tilling of the ground. This is the purport of yet another Vedic hymn. "Oh unique God, the lord of the universe, the most praise-worthy and respectable divine Being, you are approached through prayerful meditation. Here I offer my humble adoration to you" (S.37). "A wise Kṣatriya who resorts to the repetition of the name of Agni can not suffer any harm from encircling enemies, nor does he appear within the ken of their knowledge" (S.38). More important still, the name forms a link between man and God. In fact, the message of many a Mantra is that the name is a guide on the spiritual path and that it is a sūtra or the connecting bond which brings together the individual soul and the universal soul. "The thief who steals the cattle (Paśvāḥ), and who keeps food with himself and feeds the cattle, is located in his hide-out with the help of his foot-prints (Padaiḥ anugman) by intelligent men. He is hence surrounded by those who are very active. Likewise, the learned reach God through His name and the worshippers surround him", Ṛṣi Parāśara Śāktya asserts (S.39). The word Paśvāḥ (animal) is also interpreted to imply the sense-organs.[1] The Mantra thus means: "God goes into hiding into the hearts of man by taking with him the energies of the senses (Paśvāḥ). The learned trace Him

1 For both these interpretations given by S.D. Satawalekar, see Puruṣārtha, 1960, P. 402

out with the help of the name (Padaiḥ anugman). The worshippers surround him, offer him food and pray to him." Whatever may be the meaning of the word Paśvāḥ, it is clear that God is to be attained with the help of meditation on His name. Using almost the same idea and the same phraseology another verse tells us that "the God-man adored him and sought him out from amidst the waters as a lost animal is traced by its foot-prints. The wise Bhṛgus who were yearning for God found Him in their very hearts" (S.40). Similarly we read: "Let us pray at the time of sunrise, because Oh Mitra, Varuṇa and Aryaman, you are famous as guides on the spiritual path" (S.41).

It is, however not that easy to get hold of the Sūtra or the joining thread. The aspirant is wondering as to which name will really prove to be of any consequence. "From among the gods that listen to our prayers whose hallowed name should we utter? Who will protect us, bless us and shower grace on us"? (S.42). Then we are reminded of an important truth that it is not a child's play to keep firm our grip on the name. "It is difficult to stick to the name of the immortal as he goes on manifesting various forms. He who has perseverance, controls the law. Oh Fire-god, watch over him assiduously" (S.43). Sāyaṇa takes the name of God (Nāma) as nature of God (Swarūpa). The Mantra, therefore, means that it is difficult to understand (Durmantu) the nature of the immortal being. We further understand from the poem that God yields His secrets to him who grasps perfectly (Sumantu) the inner bond that connects him to divinity. Obviously, meditation on the name constitutes such a bond. It is difficult to catch hold of a thread in the first place. Secondly, by its lethargy, ignorance and mania for varied objects, the mind lets go its hold on the link and the connection is snapped. William James warns us: Never suffer an exception to occur till the new habit is securely rooted in your life. Each lapse is like the letting fall of a ball of string which one is carefully winding up. A single slip undoes more than a great many turns will wind again.[1] One has again to pick up the threads and begin the journey afresh. Did not the spider which Robert Bruce was watching, fall again and again, because its hold

1 The Principles of Psychology, Vol.I, Page 123

on the thread was loosened trial after trial? But ultimately its tenacity paid and the thread took the spider to its goal.

7. The Importance of Aum. It is an accepted concept in the Vedic and post-Vedic literature that the holy syllable Aum is a bond that connects man with God. " I climb all the five steps of sacrificial performance, i.e. I take care of all the five instruments of sacrifice namely, fried barley (Dhāna), juice of Soma plant (Soma-rasa), sacrificial animal (Paśu), oblations of ground rice (Puroḍāśa) and Ghee (Ghṛta). I carry out the performance by uttering Aum. I purify the offerings on the altar of the sacrifice" (S.44). In the ancient philosophico-mystical literature of India, Aum occupies a unique position. This sacred syllable includes in its sway concepts of benediction, peace and the power to see God face to face. The significance of Aum does not end here; it is identified with Brahman or the ultimate Reality itself. Aum may occur in the beginning of a Mantra when it implies benediction, at the end it stands for peace. At other places, it symbolises Brahman as indicated, for example, in the Yoga-sūtra तस्य वाचकः प्रणवः (I.27), or it is identified with the ultimate Reality or Brahman as in the Praśna Upaniṣad (V.2): परं च अपरं च ब्रह्म यद् ॐकार एव (Aum is both the acosmic and the cosmic Brahman). In other words, it is both the means and the end of meditation.

A couple of instances may be cited where Aum is taken to be the supreme instrument of contemplation or where it is prefixed to many a sacred Mantra both in orthodox and heterodox theology.

(a) Not only does the individual approach Brahman through Aum, even the Sun is said to be singing the syllable Aum while traversing the sky: ॐ इति ह्येषः स्वरन्नेति (Chāndogya Upaniṣad I.5.1).

(b) ॐ खं ब्रह्म (S.45). This epigrammatic statement comes at the end of यजुर्वेद as the concluding portion of the 17th Mantra of Chapter XL, which happens to be the Īśāvāsyopaniṣad, with a slight variation. ॐ खं ब्रह्म means: ॐ is the symbol of Brahman (परमात्मन्) who, like Ākāsa, is all-pervading. In तैत्तिरीय आरण्यक (X.63) we come across a similar statement: ॐ इति आत्मानं युंजीत. By the Taittirīya Āraṇyaka expression चत्वारि शृंगाः (IX.1.17), Sāyaṇa understands four quarters

of Aum (शृंगाः प्रणवस्य यानि अकारादीनि शृंगाणि). The statement from Yajurveda seems to be the basis of statements of similar import in the Upaniṣads. For example, (i) ॐ इति एतदक्षरं इदं सर्वम् in मांडूक्य (1), or तत्ते पदं संग्रहेण ब्रवीमि ॐ इत्येतद् in कठ (I.2.15). Aum as the symbol of the mystic name of Brahman was used for meditation. In ईशोपनिषद् also we have a similar idea in ॐ क्रतो स्मर which has been discussed above. Thus ॐ खं ब्रह्म implies that Aum is the means of meditation as well as the supreme goal to be achieved, namely, realisation of Brahman.

(c) ॐ नमः शिवाय. The words नमः शिवाय occur in what is called (रुद्राध्याय) (S.46) and also in तैत्तिरीय संहिता of कृष्ण यजुर्वेद (IV.5.8). The expression has been treated and employed as a sacred Mantra for meditation later by the devotees of God Śiva, and was termed शिवपंचाक्षरमंत्र. To this पंचाक्षरमंत्र the mystic syllable ॐ was pre-fixed and thus the Mantra became ॐ नमः शिवाय. There was a further change, and it was transformed to ॐ नमो शिवा at the time of medieval saints. It is interesting to note that Jñāneśvara, the greatest saint of Maharashtra uses the above stanza in his Abhanga: ॐ नमो शिवा आदि। कावडी घेतली खांदी ।। (The saints carry on their shoulders the name of God).

(d) ॐ मणिपद्मे हुम्. This is said to be the Mantra for meditation used by the Lamas of Tibet. We shall come to the significance of this a little later.

(e) The passage वागेवार्थं पश्यति वाग् ब्रवीति वागेवार्थं संनिहितं संतनाति। वाचैव विश्वं बहुरूपं निबद्धं तदेतदेकं प्रविभज्योपभुंक्ते। वागेव विश्वा भुवनानि जज्ञे वाच इत् सर्वं अमृतं मर्त्यं च declares that वाक् (शब्द) or Aum is the cause of the universe. Aum is identified with Brahman. This means that the universe is evolved out of Aum which is the original source.

(f) ॐ इत्येतत् ब्रह्मणो नेदिष्ठं नाम, यस्मात् उच्चार्यमाण एव संसारभयात् तारयति, तस्मात् उच्यते तार इति ॥ (भक्तिसंदर्भ). This passage states: Aum is the name nearest to God. It is called तार (the redeemer or the saviour) because it delivers one from the cycle of births and deaths.

(g) Śamkara's commentary on Chāndogya Upaniṣad I.1.1 runs as: ॐ इति एतद् अक्षरं परमात्मनो अभिधानं नेदिष्ठम्। तस्मिन् हि प्रयुज्यमाने स प्रसीदति, प्रियनामग्रहण इव लोकः। This refers to the spiritual significance of Aum. It says: Aum is the nearest and dearest name of Paramātman. If He is invoked by that name, He is naturally pleased.

(h) समस्तानां प्रजापतिः ॐ कारः सर्व देवत्यः पारमेष्ठ्यः ब्राह्मः वा दैवः आध्यात्मिकः is an extract from कात्यायन. It implies that ॐ in its spiritual significance represents all the gods as well as परमेष्ठी and Brahman.

8. Mantras of Different Syllables. Aspirants have attained to their goals by using names consisting of a divergent number of syllables. Whatever this number, they are all fruitful. "Agni acquired the five-fold vital airs by using a single-lettered name; I too shall do it. Aśvins conquered the two-legged man by using a two-lettered name; I shall do the same. Viṣṇu conquered the three worlds by using a three-lettered name; so will I. Soma conquered the four-legged animals by uttering a four-lettered name; I shall do likewise. Pūṣan conquered the five directions by uttering a five-lettered name; I shall follow him. Savitṛ, the all inspirer conquered six seasons by using a six-lettered Mantra; I shall emulate his example. The Maruts conquered the seven domestic animals by using a seven-lettered name; I shall do the same. Bṛhaspati conquered Gāyatrī by making use of a ten-lettered name; I shall follow suit. Indra conquered Triṣṭup by uttering an eleven-lettered name; I shall imitate him. Viśvedevas conquered Jagatī by resorting to a twelve-lettered Mantra; I shall follow the example. The eight Vasus conquered the Trayodaśa-stoma by uttering a Mantra of thirteen letters; I shall also conquer it in the same fashion. The eleven Rudras conquered the Caturdaśa-stoma by meditating upon a fourteen-lettered name; I shall follow them. The twelve Ādityas conquered the Pancadaśa-stoma with the help of fifteen-lettered Mantra; so would I. Aditi conquered the Śodaśa-stoma by using the sixteen-lettered name; I shall do the same. Prājapati conquered the Saptadaśa-stoma with the assistance of seventeen-lettered name; I am also sure to do it" (S.47). The whole universe comes under the sway of the Mantras.

In Aitareya Brāhmaṇa IX.7.31 we find a reference to तूष्णींशंस, a

method of silent prayer or meditation on a nine-syllabled (Navākṣara) Mantra and a ten-syllabled (Daśākṣara) Mantra. There is one verse in Sāmaveda which identified three gods with light: "Agni is light, light is Agni, Indra is light, light is Indra, Sūrya is light, light is Sūrya" (S.48). This hymn consists of three parts each, every part containing eight syllables. Now in Aitareya Brāhmaṇa IX.7.31, we find that one more syllable भूः is prefixed to the first part thus making the syllables nine: भूः अग्निर्ज्योतिः ज्योतिरग्निः। Similarly in the second part two more syllables भुवः are inserted after the first four syllables thus making it a ten-syllabled Mantra: इंद्रो ज्योतिः भुवो ज्योतिरिंद्रः। Again inserting the syllable स्वः before the last two syllables in the third part, another nine-syllabled Mantra is formed: सूर्यो ज्योतिः ज्योतिः स्वः सूर्यः। It may be noted that the three syllables भूः, भुवः, स्वः are called व्याहृतिऽ or the mystic syllables. These are prefixed to the Gāyatrī Mantra when it is recited as part of the morning and evening liturgy (संध्यावंदन). It may also be seen that Agni, Indra and Sūrya are identified with light (Jyoti), as they are obviously the three aspects of the supreme light viz., Atman or Paramātman. Aitareya Brāhmaṇa I.5.9.4 makes a reference to उपांशु method of जप or meditation. Sāyaṇa describes the उपांशु method as ओष्ठस्पंदनमेव परैः दृश्यते, न तु शब्दः श्रूयते तादृशं उपांशुत्वम् (In उपांशु जप , only the movements of the lips are visible to others, but the sound is not heard by them). In this connection, मनुस्मृति says,

विधियज्ञात् जपयज्ञो विशिष्टो दशभिर्गुणैः।
उपांशुः स्यात् शतगुणः साहस्रो मानसः स्मृतः ।। (II.85)

(Uttering the name of god is ten times superior, gently murmuring the name is hundred times superior and silent prayer is thousand times superior to ritualistic sacrifice). The Vedic Ṛṣis exhibit a remarkable insight when they state that the divine name constitutes a link between God and His devotee and has, therefore, a redeeming power. This tradition has come down from the Vedas and has entered into prayers of different religions. Special meaning came to be attached to every letter of a Mantra. To take an example: "The commonest mystic formula in Lamaism in Tibet, Om-ma-ni-pad-me-

Hum which literally means 'Om ! the jewel in the lotus ! Hum!' is the essence of all happiness, prosperity and knowledge and the great means of deliverance; for the Om closes re-birth amongst the gods, ma among the Titans, ni as a man, pad as a beast, me as a Tantalus, the Hum as an inhabitant of hell. And in keeping with this view, each of these six syllables is given the distinctive colour of these six states of rebirth, namely, Om the godly white; ma the Titanic blue; ni the human yellow, pad the animal green; me the Tantalic red and Hum the hellish black".[1]

We may take one more example where the spiritual significance of the name इंद्र is considered. "This is the great God who directs and controls movements of the entire universe according to the requirements of time. He is well known by the name Indra. Hence I offer my prayers to Him" (S.49). Aitareya Āraṇyaka towards the end of II.4, gives the spiritual significance of the name Indra as follows: स एतमेव पुरुषं ब्रह्म ततममपश्यत्। इदं अदर्शं इती। तस्मात् इदंद्रो नाम इदंद्रो ह वै नाम। तं इदंद्रं सन्तं इंद्र इति आचक्षते परोक्षेण। परोक्षप्रिया इव हि देवाः परोक्षप्रिया इव हि देवाः (He saw this very person as the veriest ब्रह्मन्. 'I have seen it', said he. Therefore his name is Idam-dra, Idam-dra verily is his name. Him who is Idam-dra, they call Indra cryptically, for the gods are fond of the cryptic as it were — for the gods are fond of the cryptic as it were). This portion is included in Aitareya Upaniṣad (I.3.13-14).

9. Time and Place for Meditation. This topic has been discussed in many places in the Vedas. In one sense the question is irrelevant because all times and all places are holy for meditation. In Prof. R.D. Ranade's words, what really matters is concentration and when that is achieved, time and place have no significance.[2] If we have to look to favourableness or otherwise of time and place, there would not be any meaning in the injunction which asks us to utter the name of God with every incoming and every outgoing

1 L. Austine Waddell, The Buddhism of Tibet or Lamaism, published by W. Heffer & Sons Ltd, Cambridge, First published in 1894. Reprinted in 1959, Pp 148 ff

2 See The Bhagavad-gītā as a Philosophy of God-realisation, Nagpur University, Nagpur, 1959, Pp 249-251

breath. We may remark that even if a particular time or a particular place is felt to be inauspicious, devout meditation by a God-realiser would render it auspicious. But in another sense, we do have to pay attention to time and place. After all, how many of the aspirants can vouchsafe for the top-most quality of meditation which has a power to sanctify inauspicious moments or unholy places? Hence so far as common aspirants are concerned, we can talk of a proper time and a proper place for meditation. By the term proper we understand *that* particular time or *that* particular place which helps concentration. The time when a person is likely to be less alert, or the place which will distract his attention are less useful. Hence the stipulation regarding time and place. Ṛṣi Atharvan advises, "He who meditates in the early morning before sun-rise and who by such meditation reaches God, achieves the imperishable Ātmanic bliss, Swarājya. There is no other thing greater than this" (S.50). "Perform a sacrifice in honour of the Aświns and offer oblations to them in the morning, because an oblation offered in the evening does not reach gods; it does not remain propitious. Moreover, there are others who perform a sacrifice very early. Gods favour those who sacrifice before any one else" (S.51). The statement that the oblations offered in the evening do not reach gods or they become stale, is to be taken with a pinch of salt. It just reminds us to begin our meditation early in the day and not go on postponing it. Work while it is day for one does not know when night comes.

Similar is the import of the latter part of the Mantra; it warns us not to be outdone by others. It also offers an incentive that the early worshippers are favoured by gods. Let not meditation, therefore, be deferred. There are other hymns which ask the devotees to meditate whenever they can. "Oh, you follower of Atharvan, pray to Savitṛ, pray at night, pray abundantly, pray to whatever is lustrous" (S.52). Asking an aspirant to pray at night is to be understood in an inclusive sense. One should pray not only at night but also during day. This is an instance of Ajahallakṣaṇā where the import of the sentence is not restricted to the primary meaning of the term. Thus the term night does not mean night exclusively but includes day also. Leaving no room for any rhetorical interpretation, another Mantra says, "Oh Agni, we approach you by intently praying

to you day and night" (S.53). Or again, "I milk the cow (i.e. I meditate) in the morning and in the evening. I milk the cow also in the afternoon. We enjoy the bliss and we know what is blissful" (S.54). "I invoke the goddess Aditi, in the morning and at noon. Oh Mitra and Varuṇa, I offer praises in order to gain happiness and progeny" (S.55). As prayers are offered three times a day, so fruit thereof is also expected thrice daily. "Oh Savitṛ, whatever auspicious things you have, bring them to us thrice daily. Lord, bring to us from the heavens three types of fortunes. There are three radiant and invulnerable stations. The brave sons of the omniscient lord are also three in number. Gods who embody truth, power and victory should visit our places of worship three times a day" (S.56). Of course, praying or meditating three times a day does not mean that we should pray only thrice a day. Pray at least thrice, and the more the better. "Oh brave and lustrous Agni, you are omniscient and slayer of enemies. We meditate on you everyday" (S.57). "Those who know your prowess meditate on your name continuously (Animiṣam), and those who increase your strength by pouring oblations, enter a city, well fortified against enemies" says Ṛṣi Vavri Ātreya (S.58). The word used for continuous meditation is Animiṣam i.e. without winking or sleeping. The meaning is that sages are ever alert and vigilant and meditate incessantly. This brings into bold relief the truth that remembrance of God is itself wakefulness while forgetting Him is itself sleep. "I shall never fail in meditating on you" says another Ṛk, "You, Oh Indra, are a slayer of enemies, and I know you to be so. I shall forever chant your name because its glory is unparallelled" (S.59). Such meditation may go on for months and years on end. "With a desire in the heart to gain cows, they sat awhile in their search of immortality by way of prayers. This itself is their vast resting place where, with righteousness they wished to live for months together" (S.60). What really we are urged to be engaged in, is meditation, more meditation and still more meditation. This link can not be snapped as generations after generations continue the utterance of God's name. "Oh devotee, this is the word. Future generations will continue to sing its praises. In your orisons let us be remembered. Let us not be cast away. Adieu, salutations to you" (S.61).

As with time so with place. "Oh generous gods, we may be staying indoors or may be traversing a path; we pray to you for well-being" (S.62). "By performing meditation in the caves of the mountains and at the confluence of rivers, he rises as a man of enlightenment" (S.63). "Oh Indra, of hundred valiant deeds, the singers of Gāyatrī present ballads in your praise, the singer of Arka (song of praise) also do the same. The worshippers do their best to win your grace and raise you to the skies as the players lift a pole high up to demonstrate their dexterity. When a devotee goes on ascending from pinnacle to pinnacle, Indra understands his wish. Look, he at once rushes to him along with the entourage" (S.64). We find a very beautiful passage which prescribes the best time, place and mode of meditation to gain Olympian peace. It is not necessary that an aspirant should leave the world. He can lead a house-holder's life. He should observe rules and regulations prescribed by Dharma and be pure and virtuous. He should concentrate his mind on the immaculate Nārāyaṇa, and be pure and virtuous. He should get up from his bed past midnight. Holy of speech and self-controlled, he should engage himself in meditation while the mundane world is drowned in deep sleep. Sitting in an upright position on a level ground which is sheltered from wind and sound, he should adopt the Padma posture. He should fold his hands in respectful salutation, be serene and calm and close his eyes. Having uttered the sacred syllable Aum, he should clear the mind of all doubts and meditate on his own self. Then, having composed his senses and mind he should stop thinking of other things and should not see or hear anything. When he stops entertaining ideas, it is said that he has attained Yoga. The devotee should not disturb his steady posture. He should keep his mind ever set on Nārāyaṇa. By controlled movements of his vital breath, he should make the mind equanimous. Gradually he should try to raise his consciousness to divine consciousness. The functions of the different parts of body like the vertebral column, face, nose, eyes or eye-brows should be in an equilibrium. He should fix his attention on the Bhrūmadhya and slowly rise upto the Sahasrāracakra. The inhalation and the exhalation should go on in a regulated manner. Thus he should reach the pinnacle which is declared to be the seat of the supreme Atman.

Such is the way to collect the God-head.

(गृहस्थधर्मे वर्तेत न्यायक्लप्तः शुचिव्रतः।
एतं देवं चिंतयेत नारायणमनामयम्।।
अर्धरात्रे त्यक्तनिद्रः उत्थाय शुचिर्वाग्यतः।
संप्रसुप्तेषु भूतेषु योगं युंजीत योगवित्।।
ऋज्वासीनः समे देशे निवाते शद्वर्जिते।
सव्यं पाद्मं दक्षिणस्य जानुनि श्लेषयेत् ततः।।
संहत्य दक्षिणं पाद्मं सव्ये जानुनि ऋच्छति।
ब्रह्मांजलिकृतः स्वस्थो योगसंमीलितेक्षणः।।
ओम् इत्युक्त्वा स्वं हृदयं चिंतयेत् अविशंकितः।
तत्रात्मानं समादध्यात् इंद्रियाणि मनस्तथा।।
न चेत् बुध्येत किंचान्यत् न पश्येत् श्रृणुयात् न च।
न मनस्येद्यदा योगं तदा प्राप्तः स उच्यते।।
हृदि एतं ऋषिं अभ्यसेत् पश्यन् इव यथाश्रुतिः।
प्राणान् आयम्य चासीनो यावत् तं चिंतयेत् ऋषिम्।।
उच्छ्वसिष्यन् अधोनाभिं गमयित्वा मनस्तथा।
उच्छ्वसेत् एवं असकृत् तन्मनाः योगमुन्नयेत्।।
एवं हि युंजन् सामान्यं न पश्येत् श्रृणुयात् न च।
तदा शनैः नयेत् चेतो हृदयात् ऊर्ध्वमेव तु।।
समौ तु जत्रू चास्यं च नासिका नयने भ्रुवौ।
भ्रुवोर्मध्ये परं स्थानं तत्रैतद्धारयेत् स्थिरम्।।
ललाटदेशे धार्याथ मूर्धानं गमयेत् ततः।
उच्छ्वसन् च यथाकालं नाभिं गत्वोच्छ्वसेत् पुनः।।
एतत् परं स्थानमुक्तम् ब्रह्मणः परमात्मनः।
एवं युक्तो महात्मानम् आत्मानं प्रतिपद्यते।।)

(Extract from the introductory portion to Puruṣa-sūkta commentary by Śaunaka in Ṛgvidhāna).

A point or two of psychological significance can be picked up from the passage. We cannot sunder the body from the mind. We have a body-mind complex and it is no wonder that there is inter-influence between them. Change in one may not be the whole

cause of the change in the other. There are many other factors responsible for a modification in either. A stomach-ache may not be caused by a gloomy mood but by indigestion; nonetheless a weary mind contributes its share to make the stomach-ache more unbearable. Similarly the body postures affect the mental conditions. Here is what a great psychologist says : ".... sit all day in a moping posture, sigh and reply to everything with a dismal voice, and your melancholy lingers."[1] On the other hand a perfectly sound physique may not be the whole cause of euphoria, happy tidings might have induced it; still a healthy body sends pulsations to make the euphoria more expressive. "There is no more valuable precept in moral education than this, as all who have experience know: if we wish to conquer undesirable emotional tendencies in ourselves, we must assiduously, and in the first instance cold-bloodedly, go through the outward movements of those contrary dispositions which we prefer to cultivate. The reward of persistency will infallibly come, in the fading out of the sullenness or depression, and the advent of real cheerfulness and kindliness in their stead. Smooth the brow, brighten the eye, contract the dorsal rather than the ventral aspect of the frame, and speak in a major key, pass the genial compliment, and your heart must be frigid indeed if it do not gradually thaw!"[2] In like manner, though we cannot just put the body under rigorous drill and automatically gather a rich harvest of mental concentration, we must not be oblivious to the fact that bodily discipline has much to offer to the mental make-up than it is normally realised. Concentration on the tip of the nose (नासाग्रदृष्टि), posture (आसन), breath-control (प्राणायाम) are heavy-weights in the psychology of meditation. We have to exploit them for a proper mood for contemplation. In the next chapter we shall see that the Vedic thinkers were aware of the role the body plays in meditation.

10. Fruits of Meditation. To meditate on the name of God purely for the love of it, indicates a very high stage in the spiritual career

1 William James, The Principles of Psychology, Vol II, Dover Publications, Inc. 1950 Edition, P. 463

2 Ibid P. 463

of an aspirant. Though such attitude is displayed in many a lyric, there are others where demand of fruit comes trailing on the mention of sacrifice. The common man meditates for some kind of fruit. The Vedas have made a mention of different fruits. In the first place, we are told that one who meditates on the name of God, gains strength. "Oh Indra, you fulfil the desires of those who invoke your grace; your chariot is sturdy, your horses too are stubborn. Beyond doubt, Oh valorous one, not only you are yourself full of energy, but the singing of your name also is so. I, your devotee, full of virility am invoking you along with all your graces. You are fond of praises and the singing of your name makes one dignified" (S.65). "This is the secret fruit obtained by milking the divine cow by means of meditation on the name of the sovereign God. Those who offer this invigorating drink to Indra are endowed with the vision of various fortunes" (S.66). They include the capacity to overthrow one's enemies. "The aspirant who is lucky enough to partake of heavenly nectar (Soma) becomes free from all kinds of afflictions. His movements become unhindered. He enjoys prosperity" (S.67). Ṛṣi Bārhaspatya Bharadvāja says, "Almighty Indra does not deceive; nor can he be deceived. Meditation on his name is always auspicious. He annihilates the five demons Cumuri, Dhuni, Pipru, Śambara and Śuṣṇa (the five evil forces harassing human beings) and crushes their fortresses to ruin" (S.68). Again, "he is eager to see the cow in the form of lustre. Fortified by righteousness and faith, Indra broke open the crest of the mountain of passions, and by the authority of the name of God, conquered greed" (S.69). The name is again and again mentioned as a cover against injuries. In the last chapter we have noted how God's name and God's grace are considered to be a protective armour. He who envelopes himself with the name of God uproots the enemy. Meditation does not merely free a devotee from the danger of a foe, it also showers positive wealth of him. "I shall send for the cow which gives a lot of milk. He who has skill can alone milk her. Let the all-inspirer Savitṛ fill our coffers. He possesses great victory, I must sing his praises. Look, the mother of bounteous riches runs with eagerness to meet her calf. She should not be hurt by anyone. Let us give milk for the Aświns and let her grow, so that our fortune grows with her" (S.70). Almost every god is approached with a

similar request. "Pour enthusiasm on our devotion which rises from the depth of our hearts as the clouds pour waters on the earth. Oh Soma it is you who augments the material and the spiritual affluence" (S.71). "The devotees who were on the right path drank Soma which energises a person. The gods were all intent on getting divine glory. The God whose fame is spread wide and who displays a charming form manifested Himself before the devotees" (S.72). Having feasted their eyes on the pleasing form of God, the devotees naturally long to be close to Him and share in His celebrity. "When you revealed yourself out of a dried piece of wood, aspirants, on witnessing this wonder, began to rejoice in your exploits. Having taken to a systematic course of austerities and having practised meditation on your name, they attain to divinity" (S.73).

The deities that were worshipped by Vedic Ṛṣis were legion. That is why the names by which they invoke gods are multiple in number. We find in one song that different deities are called upon to protect the sacrificial altar from different sides. "Let Indra, the Lord of gods, along with Vasus protect the eastern side of the sacrificial altar. Let the wise Varuṇa leading the eleven Rudras protect it from the west. Yama, who travels as fast as the mind, should along with the manes, protect the altar from the south. Let the highest Lord who controls the creation, sustenance and destruction of the world lead the twelve Ādityas and protect it from the north. The remnants of the holy water which was used for sprinkling will be thrown by me outside the region reserved for the sacrifice" (S.74). Elsewhere we read: "God Soma, chanter of the name is ever alert and invincible" (S.75).

11. The Name as a Master Unifier. Thus while extolling gods by means of the name, the Ṛṣis have come to present laurels to the name itself. They have enthroned it, saying that it has come down to the earth for the benefit of the mortals. "Indra, the wielder of the thunderbolt attacked the impious and got the name Maghavan because of his generosity. The munificent God has preserved that name even in the human era in order to bless the devotees" (S.76). The name is a god-sent award. "We have solemnised the sacrifice. Let there be jubilation with singing of hymns. We have worshipped

Agni whole-heartedly. In order to instruct seers to perform sacrifices, gods themselves descended from heavens" (S.77). By sacrifice we understand meditation.

At some fabulously old time the Vedas lavishly sowed the seed of the most wide-spread and universally appealing technique of spiritual practice, that of meditation on the name of God, to reap a harvest of peace and tranquillity. The sages loved the name so much that they came to look upon it as the goal itself. The name weaves round itself the whole of creation and acts as a mediator between things that are totally diverse. The poet-saint makes the Goddess of speech (वाक्) herself express the potency of the word as a unifier. Having directly realised the non-difference between her own self, God as well as the entire universe, Vāgāmbhṛṇī bursts out in ecstasy: "I move with Vasus and Rudras and also with Ādityas and all gods. To Mitra and Varuṇa I extend my backing and likewise to Indra, Agni and Aśvins too. I foster that mighty stimulus in Soma for enabling him to deal deadly blows to the opponents. I sustain Pūṣan, Tvaṣṭā and Bhaga. I recompense those who offer oblations, by giving them abundant wealth; a similar reward is given by me to those who worship with Soma. I am a sovereign queen and a confluence of all the Vasus. I am omniscient and the foremost among the holy ones. Gods found me established in many places. I live in various places in diverse forms. It is only through my inspiration that one eats, sees, breathes and hears what is spoken. People do not know me even though they happen to be near. Hark, I am telling you what is worthy of belief. Yes, I myself say this which is acceptable to gods and men. I can make him whomsoever I desire, Brahman, a Ṛṣi or a gifted wise man. For Rudra I stretch out the string of his bow in order to slay the deadly enemy of holy spiritual souls. In man, I infuse the exhilerating energy and I entirely pervade both heaven and earth. I bring forth the Father on the top of the universe. I have my home within the unfathomable waters of the ocean. Thence I stretch out to all the worlds and touch with my beautiful form the yonder heaven. It is I who breathes forth like wind, setting in motion all the existing worlds. Beyond this earth and beyond even heaven have I arisen. I have become all this through my own grandeur" (S.78). The

goddess of speech, Vāk, daughter of sage Ambhṛṇa, is the most exalted among the women seers of the Vedic age. She presents herself as a joining agency. She brings together different groups of gods. She dwells in various places but holds them all within herself. She acts as a schematiser between heaven and earth by entering both; between sacrifice and its unseen merit by dispensing fruit to the sacrificer; between men and gods by declaring what both of them cherish; between created worlds and that which is beyond them by extending herself over them. Does it not prove that Vāk, word or name is a connecting link between everything and every other thing? Verily it is a band-master, or in the phrase of Leibnitz — a *vinculum substantiale*.

SOURCES-VI

1. चत्वारि वाक् परिमिता पदानि तानि विदुः ब्राह्मणा ये मनीषिणः।
गुहा त्रीणि निहिता नेंगयंति तुरीयं वाचो मनुष्या वदंति।। ऋग्वेद I.164.45

2. तस्मै नूनमभिद्यवे वाचा विरूप नित्यया। वृष्णे चोदस्व सुष्टुतिम्।। ऋग्वेद VIII.75.6

3. इयं वेदिः परो अन्तः पृथिव्या अयं यज्ञो भुवनस्य नाभिः।
अयं सोमो वृष्णो अश्वस्य रेतो ब्रह्मायं वाचः परमं व्योम।। ऋग्वेद I.164.35

4. ऋधङ्मन्त्रो योनिं य आबभूवामृता सुर्वर्धमानः सुजन्मा।
अदब्धासुभ्राजमानोऽहेव त्रितो धर्ता दाधार त्रीणि।। अथर्ववेद V.1.1

5. विभर्ति चारु इंद्रस्य नाम येन विश्वानि वृत्रा जघान।। ऋग्वेद IX.109.14

6. अग्ने भूरीणि तव जातवेदो देव स्वधावोऽमृतस्य नाम।
याश्च माया मायिनां विश्वमिन्व त्वे पूर्वीः संदधुः पृष्टबंधो।। ऋग्वेद III.20.3

7. ऋभुश्चक्र ईड्यं चारु नाम विश्वानि देवो वयुनानि विद्वान्।
ससस्य चर्म घृतवत् पदं वेस्त दिदग्नी रक्षत्य प्रयुच्छन्।। ऋग्वेद III.5.6

8. अभीक आसां पदवीरबोध्यादित्यानाम हे चारु नाम।
आपाश्चिदस्मा अरमंत देवीः पृथग् व्रजंतीः परि षीमवृञ्जन्।। ऋग्वेद III.56.4

9. परो यत् त्वं परम आजनिष्ठाः परावति श्रुत्यं नाम बिभ्रत्।
अतश्चिदिंद्रादभयंत देवाः विश्वा अपो अजयद् दासपत्नीः।। ऋग्वेद V.30.5

10. आ तिष्ठंतं परि विश्वे अभूषञ्छ्रियो वसानश्चरति स्वरोचिः।
महत् तद् वृष्णो असुरस्य नामाऽऽविश्वरूपो अमृतानि तस्थौ।। ऋग्वेद III.38.4

11. येषामर्णो न सप्रथो नामत्वेषं शश्वतामेकमिद् भुजे।
वयो न पित्र्यं सहः।। ऋग्वेद VIII.20.13

12. प्रजापते न त्वदेतान्यन्यो विश्वा रूपाणि परि ता बभूव।
यत्कामास्ते जुहुमस्तन्नो अस्त्वयममुष्य पिता सावस्य
पिता वयं स्याम पतयो रयीणां स्वाहा।
रुद्र यत्ते क्रिवि परं नाम तस्मिन्हुतमस्यमेष्टमसि स्वाहा।। यजुर्वेद X.20

13. त्रिर्देवः पृथिवीमेष एतां वि चक्रमे शतर्चसं महित्वा।
प्र विष्णुरस्तु तवसस्तवीयान् त्वेषं ह्यस्य स्थविरस्य नाम।। ऋग्वेद VII.100.3

14. विश्वा हि वो नमस्यानि वंद्या नामानि देवा उत यज्ञियानि वः।
ये स्थ जाता अदितेर द्भ्यस्परि ये पृथिव्यास्ते म इह श्रुता हवम्।। ऋग्वेद X.63.2

15. तदस्यानीकं उत चारुनामापीच्यं वर्धते नप्तुरपाम्।
यं इंधते युवतयः समित्था हिरण्यवर्णं घृतं अन्नं अस्य।। ऋग्वेद II.35.11

16. मध्वो वो नाम मारुतं यजत्राः प्र यज्ञेषु शवसा मदंति।
ये रेजयंति रोदसी चिदुर्वी पिन्वंति उत्सं यदयासुरुग्राः।। ऋग्वेद VII.57.1

17. ऋतस्य जिह्वा पवते मधु प्रियं वक्ता पतिर्धियो अस्या अदाभ्यः।
दधाति पुत्रः पित्रोः अपीच्यं नाम तृतीयमधि रोचने दिवः।। ऋग्वेद IX.75.2

18. श्रिये सुदृशीरुपरस्य याः स्वर्विरोचमानः ककुभामचोदते।
सुगोपा असि न दभाय सुक्रतो परो मायाभिर्ऋत आस नाम ते।।
ज्यायांसमस्य यतुनस्य केतुन ऋषिस्वरं चरति यासु नाम ते।
यादृश्मिन् धायि तमपस्यया विदद् य उ स्वयं वहते सो अरं करत्।।
ऋग्वेद V.44.2, 8

19. अजो न क्षां दाधार पृथिवीं तस्तंभ द्यां, मंत्रेभिः सत्यैः।
प्रिया पदानि पश्वो नि पाहि विश्वायुरग्ने गुहा गुहं गाः।। ऋग्वेद I.67.6

20. दूरे तन्नाम गुह्यं पराचैर्यत् त्वा भीते अह्वयेतां वयोधै।
उदस्तभ्नाः पृथिवीं द्यामभीके भ्रातुः पुत्रान् मघवन् तित्विषाणः।।

महत् तन्नाम गुह्यं पुरुस्पृग् येन भूतं जनयो येन भव्यम्।
प्रत्नं जातं ज्योतिर्यदस्य प्रियं प्रियाः समविशन्त पञ्च।। ऋग्वेद X.55.1, 2

21. अर्जुनो ह वै नामेंद्रो यदस्य गुह्यं नाम अर्जुन्यः। शतपथ ब्राह्मण II.1.2.11

22. यत्र वेत्थ वनस्पते देवानां गुह्या नामानि। तत्र हव्यानि गामय।। ऋग्वेद V.5.10

23. ओ षू णो अग्ने शृणुहि त्वमीळितो देवेभ्यो ब्रवसि
यज्ञियेभ्यो राजभ्यो यज्ञियेभ्यः।
यद्ध त्यामङ्गिरोभ्यो धेनुं देवा अदत्तन।
वि तां दुह्रे अर्यमा कर्तरी सचाँ एष तां वेद मे सचा।। ऋग्वेद I.139.7

24. तव श्रिये मरुतो मर्जयंत रुद्र यत् ते जनिम चारु चित्रम्।
पदं यत् विष्णोः उपमं निधायि तेन पासि गुह्यं नाम गोनाम्।। ऋग्वेद V.3.3

25. प्र नूनं ब्रह्मणस्पतिः मंत्रं वदति उक्थ्यम्।
यस्मिन् इंद्रो वरुणो मित्रो अर्यमा देवा ओकांसि च क्रिरे।।
तमित् वोचेमा विदथेषु शंभुवं मंत्रं देवा अनेहसम्।
इमां च वाचं प्रतिहर्यथा नरो विश्वोत् वामा वो अश्नवत्।। ऋग्वेद I.40.5, 6

26. उप प्रक्षे मधुमति क्षियंतः पुष्येम रयिं धीमहे त इंद्र। सामवेद 444

27. सा नो हवं जुषतामिन्द्रपत्नी, वागक्षरं प्रथमजा ऋतस्य।
वेदानां माताऽमृतस्य नाभिः।
सा नो जुषाणोपयज्ञमायात्। अवन्ती देवी सुहना मे अस्तु।
यामृषयो मन्त्रकृतो मनीषिणः। अन्वैच्छन् देवास्तपसा श्रमेण।
तां देवीं वाचं हविषा यजामहे। सा नो दधातु सुकृतस्य लोके।।
तैत्तिरीय ब्राह्मण II.8.8.5

28. सहस्त्रधा पंचदशानि उक्था यावद् द्यावा पृथिवी तावदित् तत्।
सहस्त्रधा महिमानः सहस्त्रं यावद् ब्रह्मविष्ठितं तावती वाक्।। ऋग्वेद X.114.8

29. यज्ञेन वाचः पदवीयमायन् तामन्वविंदन्नृषिषु प्रविष्टाम्।
तामाभृत्या व्यदधुः पुरुत्रा तां सप्त रेभा अभि सं नवन्ते।। ऋग्वेद X.71.3

30. प्रिया वो नाम हुवे तुराणामा यत् तृपन्मरुतो वावशानाः।। ऋग्वेद VII.56.10

31. धीती वा ये अनयन्वाचो अग्रं मनसा वा ये अवदन् ऋतानि।
तृतीयेन ब्रह्मणा वावृधानास्तुरीयेणामन्वत नाम धेनोः।। अथर्ववेद VII.1.1

32. मर्ता अमर्त्यस्य ते भूरि नाम मनामहे। विप्रासो जादवेदसः।। ऋग्वेद VIII.11.5

33. सुअग्नयो हि वार्यं देवासो दधिरे च नः। सुअग्नयो मनामहे।। ऋग्वेद I.26.8

34. मा नो देवानां विशः प्रस्नातीरिवोस्राः। कृशं न हासुरघ्राः।।
विद्मा हि ते पुरा वयमग्ने पितुर्यथावसः। अधा ते सुम्नमीमहे।। ऋग्वेद VIII.75.8, 16

35. वायुरनिलममृतमथेदं भस्मांतं शरीरम्।
ओम् क्रतो स्मर। क्लिबे स्मर। कृतं स्मर।। यजुर्वेद XL.15

36. तत् सवितुः वरेण्यं भर्गो देवस्य धीमहि।
धियो यो नः प्रचोदयात्।। ऋग्वेद III.62.10

37. दिव्यो गंधर्वो भुवनस्य यस्पतिरेक एव नमस्यो विक्ष्वीड्यः।
तं त्वा यौ मि ब्रह्मणा दिव्य देव नमस्ते अस्तु दिवि ते सधस्थम्।। अथर्ववेद II.2.1

38. नैनं घ्नंति पर्यायिणो न सन्त्रान् अव गच्छति।
अग्नेर्यः क्षत्रियो विद्वान् नाम गृह्णात्यायुषे।। अथर्ववेद VI.76.4

39. पश्चा न तायुं गुहा च तंतं नमो युजानं नमो वहंतम्।
सजोषा धीराः पदैरनु ग्मन्नुप त्वा सीदन् विश्वे यजत्राः।। ऋग्वेद I.65.1

40. इमं विधंतो अपां सधस्थे पशुं न नष्टं पदैरनुग्मन्।
गुहा च तं तमुशिजो नमोभिरिच्छंतो धीरा भृगवोऽविंदन्।। ऋग्वेद X.46.2

41. तद् वो अद्य मनामहे सूक्तैः सूर उदिते।
यदोहते वरुणो मित्रो अर्यमा यूयमृतस्य रथ्यः।। ऋग्वेद VII.66.12

42. कथा देवानां कतमस्य यामनि सुमंतु नाम शृण्वतां मनामहे।
को मृळाति कतमो नो मयस्करत् कतम ऊती अभ्या ववर्तति।। ऋग्वेद X.64.1

43. दुर्मंत्वत्रामृतस्य नाम सलक्ष्मा यद्विषुरूपा भवाति।
यमस्य यो मनवते सुमंत्वग्ने तमृष्व पाह्यप्रयुच्छन्।। ऋग्वेद X.12.6

44. पंच पदानि रुपो अन्वरोहं चतुष्पदीमन्वेमि व्रतेन।
अक्षरेण प्रति मिम एतामृतस्य नाभावधि सं पुनामि।। ऋग्वेद X.13.3

45. ओम् खं ब्रह्म। यजुर्वेद XL.17

46. नमः शंभवाय च मयोभवाय च नमः शंक़राय च।
मयस्कराय च नमः शिवाय च शिवतराय च। यजुर्वेद XVI.41

47. अग्निरेकाक्षरेण प्राणमुदजयत् तमुज्जेषम्
अश्विनौ द्व्यक्षरेण द्विपदो मनुष्यानुदजयतां तानुज्जेषम्
विष्णुस्त्र्यक्षरेण त्रील्लोंकानुदजयत्तानुज्जेषम्
सोमश्चतुरक्षरेण चतुष्पदः पशूनुदजयत्तानुज्जेषम्।।

पूषा पञ्चाक्षरेण पञ्च दिश उदजयत्ता उज्जेषम्
सविता षडक्षरेण षड्तूनुदजयत्तानुज्जेषम्
मरुतः सप्ताक्षरेण सप्त ग्राम्यान् पशूनुदजयँस्तानुज्जेषम्
बृहस्पतिरष्टाक्षरेण गायत्रीमुदजयत्तामुज्जेषम्।।

मित्रो नवाक्षरेण त्रिवृतं स्तोममुदजयत् तमुज्जेषम्
वरुणो दशाक्षरेण विराजमुदजयत्तामुज्जेषम्
इंन्द्र एकादशाक्षरेण त्रिष्टुभमुदजयत्तामुज्जेषम्
विश्वे देवा द्वादशाक्षरेण जगतीमुदजयँस्तामुज्जेषम्।।

वसवस्त्रयोदशाक्षरेण त्रयोदशं स्तोममुदजयँस्तमुज्जेषम्
रुद्राश्चतुर्दशाक्षरेण चतुर्दशं स्तोममुदजयँस्तमुज्जेषम्
आदित्याः पञ्चदशाक्षरेण पञ्चदशं स्तोममुदजयँस्तमुज्जेषम्
अदितिः षोडशाक्षरेण षोडषं स्तोममुदजयत्तमुज्जेषम्
प्रजापतिः सप्तदशाक्षरेण सप्तदशं स्तोममुदजयत्तमुज्जेषम्।। यजुर्वेद IX.31-34

48. अग्निर्ज्योतिः ज्योतिरग्निः इंद्रो ज्योतिः ज्योतिरिंद्रः।
सूर्यो ज्योतिः ज्योतिः सूर्यः।। सामवेद 1831

49. विश्वतोदावन्विश्वतो न आ भर यंत्वा शविष्ठमीमहे।
एष ब्रह्माय ऋत्विय इंद्रो नाम श्रुतो गृणे।। सामवेद 437, 438

50. नाम नाम्ना जोहवीति पुरा सूर्यात् पुरोषसः।
यदजः प्रथमं संबभूव स ह तत्स्वराज्यमियाय यस्मान्नान्यत्परमस्ति भूतम्।।
अथर्ववेद X.7.31

51. प्रातर्यजध्वमश्विना हिनोत न सायमस्ति देवया अजुष्टम्।
उतान्यो अस्मद् यजते वि चावः पूर्वः पूर्वो यजमानो वनीयान्।। ऋग्वेद V.77.2

52. दोषो गाय बृहद्गाय द्युमद्धेहि। आथर्वण स्तुहि देवं सवितारम्।। अथर्ववेद VI.1.1

53. उप त्वाग्ने दिवे दिवे दोषावस्तर्धिया वयम्। नमो भरंत एमसि।। ऋग्वेद I.1.7

54. दुहे सायं दुहे प्रातर् दुहे मध्यं दिनं परि।
दोहा ये अस्य संयंति तान् विद्मानुपदस्वतः।। अथर्ववेद IV.11.12

55. प्रातर्देवीमदितिं जोहवीमि मध्यंदिन उदिता सूर्यस्य।
राये मित्रावरुणा सर्वतातेळे तोकाय तनयाय शंयोः।। ऋग्वेद V.69.3

56. त्रिरा दिवः सवितर्वार्याणि दिवे दिव आ सुव त्रिर्नो अह्नः।
त्रिधातु राय आ सुवा वसूनि भग त्रातर्धिषणे सातये धाः।।
त्रिरुत्तमा दूणशा रोचनानि त्रयो राजंति असुरस्य वीराः।
ऋतावान इषिरा दूळभासस्त्रिरा दिवो विदथे संतु देवाः।। ऋग्वेद III.56.6,8

57. परि त्वाग्ने पुरं वयं विप्रं सहस्य धीमहि।
धृषद्वर्ण दिवेदिवे हन्तारं भङ्गुरावतः।। अथर्ववेद VII.71.1

58. जुहुरे वि चितयंतो ऽनिमिषं नृम्णं पांति। आ दृळ्हां पुरं विविशुः।। ऋग्वेद V.19.2

59. न ते गिरो अपि मृष्ये तुरस्य न सुष्टुतिमसुर्यस्य विद्वान्।
सदा ते नाम स्वयशो विवक्मि।। ऋग्वेद VII.22.5

60. नि गव्यता मनसा सेदुरर्कैः कृण्वानासो अमृतत्वाय गातुम्।
इदं चित्नु सदनं भूर्यषां येन मासाँ असिषासन्नृतेन।। ऋग्वेद III.31.9

61. एतद् वचो जरितर्मापि मृष्ठा आ यत् ते घोषानुत्तरा युगानि।
उक्थेषु कारो प्रति नो जुषस्व मा तो नि कः पुरुषत्रा नमस्ते।। ऋग्वेद III.33.8

62. वयमिद्वः सुदानवः क्षियंतो यांतो अध्वन्ना। देवा वृधाय हूमहे।। ऋग्वेद VIII.83.6

63. उपह्वरे गिरीणां संगथे च नदीनाम्। धिया विप्रो अजायत।। ऋग्वेद VIII.6.28

64. गायंति त्वा गायत्रिणो अर्चंत्यर्कमर्किणः।
ब्रह्माणस्त्वा शतक्रत उद् वंशमिव येमिरे।।

यत सानोः सानुमारुहत् भूर्यस्पष्ट कर्त्वम्।
तदिंद्रो अर्थं चेतति यूथेन वृष्णिरेजति।। ऋग्वेद I.10.1,2

65. वृषायमिंद्र ते रथ उतो ते वृषणा हरी। वृषा त्वं शतक्रतो वृषा हवः।।
वृषा त्वा वृषणं हुवे वज्रिन् चित्राभिरूतिभिः।
वावंथ हि प्रतिष्टुतिं वृषा हवः।। ऋग्वेद VIII.13.31, 33

66. तदिन्नवस्य वृषभस्य धेनोरा नामभिर्ममिरे सक्म्यं गोः।
अन्यदन्यदसुर्यं वसाना नि मायिनो ममिरे रूपमस्मिन्।। ऋग्वेद III.38.7

67. न स राजा व्यथते यस्मिन् इंद्रस्तीव्रं सोमं पिबति गोसखायम्।
आ सत्वनैरजति हंति वृत्रं क्षेति क्षितीः सुभगो नाम पुष्यन्।। ऋग्वेद V.37.4

68. स यो न मुहे न मिथू जनो भूत् सुमन्तुनामा चुमुरिं धुनिं च।
वृणक् पिप्रुं शम्बरं शुष्णमिन्द्रः पुरां च्यौत्नाय शयथाय नू चित्।। ऋग्वेद VI.18.8

69. अयमुशानः पर्यद्रिमुस्रा ऋतधीतिभिर्ऋतयुग्युजानः।
रुजदरुग्णं वि वलस्य सानुं पणींर्वचोभिरभि योधदिन्द्रः।। ऋग्वेद VI.39.2

70. उप ह्वये सुदुघां धेनुमेतां सुहस्तो गोधुगुत दोहदेनाम्।
श्रेष्ठं सवं सविता साविषन्नोऽ भीद्धो घर्मस्तदु षु प्र वोचम्।।

हिङ्कृण्वती वसुपत्नी वसूनां वत्समिच्छन्ती मनसाभ्यागात्।
दुहामश्विभ्यां पयो अघ्न्येयं सा वर्धतां महते सौभगाय।। ऋग्वेद I.164.26, 27

71. त्वं धियं मनोयुजं सृजा वृष्टिं न तन्यतुः।
त्वं वसूनि पार्थिवा दिव्या च सोम पुष्यसि।। ऋग्वेद IX.100.3

72. ऋतस्य पथि वेधा अपायि श्रिये मनांसि देवासो अक्रन्।
दधानो नाम महो वचोभिर्वपुर्दृशये वेन्यो व्यावः।। ऋग्वेद VI.44.8

73. आदित् ते विश्वे क्रतुं जुषंत शुष्काद् यद् देव, जीवो जनिष्ठाः।
भजंत विश्वे, देवत्वं नाम ऋतं सपंतो अमृतमेवैः।। ऋग्वेद I.68.2

74. इन्द्रघोषस्त्वा वसुभिः पुरस्तात्पातु प्रचेतास्त्वा रुद्रैः
पश्चात्पातु मनो जवास्त्वा पितृभिर्दक्षिणतः पातु
विश्वकर्मा त्वादित्यैरुत्तरतः पात्विदमहं तप्तं वार्बहिर्धा
यज्ञान्निः सृजामि।। यजुर्वेद V.11

75. ककुभं रूपं वृषभस्य रोचते बृहच्छुक्रः शुक्रस्य पुरोगाः सोमः सोमस्य पुरोगाः।
यत्ते सोमादाभ्यं नाम जागृवि तस्मैत्वा गृह्णामि तस्मै
ते सोम सोमाय स्वाहा।। यजुर्वेद VIII.49

76. तदूचुषे मानुषेमा युगानि कीर्तेन्यं मघवा नाम बिभ्रत।
उपप्रयन् दस्युहत्याय वज्री यत् ह सूनुः श्रवसे नाम दधे।। ऋग्वेद I.103.4

77. प्राञ्चं यज्ञं चकृम वर्धतां गीः समिद्भिरग्निं नमसा दुवस्यन्।
दिवः शशासुर्विदथा कवीनां गृत्साय चित् तवसे गातुमीषुः।। ऋग्वेद III.1.2

78. अहं रुद्रेभिः वसुभिः चरामि अहं आदित्यैः उत विश्वदेवैः।
अहं मित्रावरुणोभा बिभर्मि अहं इंद्राग्नी अहं अश्विनोभा।।
अहं सोमं आहनसं बिभर्मि अहं त्वष्टारं उत पूषणं भगम्।
अहं दधामि द्रविणं हविष्मते सुप्राव्ये यजमानाय सुन्वते।।
अहं राष्ट्री संगमनी वसूनां चिकितुषी प्रथमा यज्ञियानाम्।
तां मा देवाः व्यदधुः पुरुत्रा भूरिस्थात्रां भूर्यावेशयंतीम्।।
मया सो अन्नमत्ति यो विपश्यतियः प्राणिति य ईं शृणोति उक्तम्।
अमंतवो मां त उप क्षियंति श्रुधि श्रुत श्रद्धिवं ते वदामि।।
अहमेव स्वयमिदं वदामि जुष्टं देवेभिः उत मानुषेभिः।
यं कामये तं तं उग्रं कृणोमि तं ब्रह्माणं तं ऋषिं तं सुमेधाम्।।
अहं रुद्राय धनुरा तनोमि ब्रह्मद्विषे शरवे हंतवा उ।
अहं जनाय समदं कृणोमि अहं द्यावा पृथिवी आ विवेश।।
अहं सुवे पितरं अस्य मूर्धन् मम योनिः अप्सु अंतः समुद्रे।
ततो वि तिष्ठे भुवनानु विश्वोतामूं द्यां वर्ष्मणोप स्पृशामि।।
अहमेव वातः इव प्र वामि आरभमाणा भुवनानि विश्वा।
परो दिवा पर एना पृथिव्यैतावती महिना सं बभूव।। ऋग्वेद X.125.1-8

CHAPTER VII

Methods of Meditation

In the Vedas, the deities are regarded as intimately connected with the world. They are, in a way, in the world, of the world and for the world. They are in the world, because they are immanent and not transcendent. They are of the world, in that they take part in the activities of the mortals. They are for the world, because the Vedic man approaches them for getting solved each and every difficulty. Our ancestors do not worship those deities that transcend imagination, but those that are sovereigns of the natural elements. The deistic conception of an absentee God is foreign to them. God is विश्वात्मक (all-enveloping). We know Him through his manifestations. "The nature of ultimate Reality is to be read, therefore, in its manifestation and may be read there truly. We may be sure the revelation is not exhaustive, for all revelation must be *ad modum recipientis;* it must be proportionate to the capacity of the receiving mind. Every advance in knowledge, or in goodness, or in the intuitions of beauty and grandeur offered us in nature or in art, is a further revelation of the heights and depths of the divine nature."[1] This may, generally speaking, be the Vedic view of deities, though references to the great transcendent Being are not wanting.

We shall take a brief resume of the discussion which is to follow. For the purposes of meditation an idea is used. It provides a habitation and a name to the nebulous infinitude of God and facilitates meditation. The mind is pinned down to the idea and its wild jumps are arrested. This is the ideological element. The body must be made an ally and so it is to be handled with care. The Yogic element involves disciplining of the mind and body. The Vedic Ṛṣi is not expected to know the structure of the body. But it is creditable that mention is made of plexuses and of breath control. Meditation

1 A.S. Pringle - Pattison, The idea of God, P.175

becomes effective only when accompanied by intense love for God—this constitutes the emotional element. We shall then take a survey of nine kinds of Bhakti. Special mention must be made of Kīrtana. Sūktas or Sāmas to be sung on special occasions are recorded. In the end we shall see that the seer was fully aware of the importance of meditation in the company of the good.

1. The Ideological Element. A concept or an idea proves to be a support (आलंबन) for meditation. This is called the ideological element by Prof. R.D. Ranade.[1] An Ālambana is the mental exercise practised by the Yogins in endeavouring to bring before their thoughts the gross form of the eternal. A full-blown version of meditation on an Ālambana is found in the Kaṭhopaniṣad where the supreme Ālambana is said to be Aum: एतदालंबनं श्रेष्ठं एतदालंबनं परं एतदालंबनं ज्ञात्वा ब्रह्मलोके महीयते (I. 2.17). (That is the best support; that is the supreme support. Knowing that support, one becomes adorable in the Brahman-world). While commenting on the Bhagavad-gītā verse X.20 Śamkara says that God is to be meditated upon as the inner enlivening principle of all entities. However, if that is not possible, the other manifestations enumerated subsequently are to be meditated upon. सर्वभूताशयस्थितः सर्वेषां भूतानामाशये अन्तर्हृदि स्थितः अहमात्मा प्रत्यगात्मा नित्यं ध्येयः। तदशक्तेन च उत्तरेषु भावेषु चिन्त्यः अहं यस्मात् अहमेव आदिः भूतानां कारणं तथा मध्यं च स्थितिः अन्तः प्रलयश्च। The higher the stature of the idea meditated upon, the more the intensity of reverence felt. Hence the necessity of an idea of supreme pre-eminence.

The Vedic seer cherished knowledge, admired valour and worshipped lustre. He meditated on God as a reservoir of these qualities. We shall begin with the idea of sovereignty and power. God is to be meditated upon as the all-powerful and full of glory. "To that omnipresent and omniscient Lord, whose resplendent light illumines all quarters, whose life-force enlivens the entire creation and whose sovereign authority controls every movement of objects — to that Lord my prayer is principally addressed" (S.1). "Almighty Lord who

1 The Bhagavad-gītā as a Philosophy of God-realisation, P. 240

protects all beings, in whom all the worlds find their anchor and who is all supreme, rules over the entire universe. To propitiate him I accept you," prays the Ṛṣi (S.2). "Oh Lord, you are greater than our enemy and you it is, that controls all power. We worship you as the all-enveloping one and as sovereign ruler of all. We worship you as life-giving waters, as strength, as greatness and as plenary power. We again pray to you as waters, dazzling power and pure strength. We lie prostrate before you, who are the greatest, all-pervading, goodness incarnate and all-knowing. We bow low before you, the ever-expanding one, grand, all-enveloping and omnipresent one. You are the richest of all, you gather all bounties and keep them with you. We salute you," prays Ṛṣi Brahmā (S.3). "Oh Sun, wealth and beauty are verily wedded to you; day and night are your companions; the stars that shine in the heavens are your forms; and earth and heavens constitute your blooming face. I am your devotee, which fruit of my action should I yearn for? Should I be satisfied with heaven? Or, should I desire the whole universe?" (S.4).

A fundamental pre-requisite of spiritual life is moral purity and that is to be found in God at its height. Morality lives because God is there to manifest it in its purest form. As one light is kindled by another light, the aspirant wants the princely gift of purity from God. "Give lustre to our men of holy lore. Give lustre to our kingly men. Give lustre to commoners and working men. Give through lustre, lustre to me" (S.5). God is next said to be the moral governor. "Oh Agni, you are the protector of moral laws, you are the God among these mortals, you it is, who should be acclaimed in sacrifice" (S.6).

God can also be contemplated upon as spiritual value. The aspirant wishes that he himself be endowed with those valuable qualities and blessed with spiritual illumination. "Thou art the fiery spirit, give me the fiery spirit. Thou art manly vigour; give me the manly vigour. Thou art power; give me power. Thou art energy; give me energy. Thou art battle fury; give me battle fury. Thou art the conquering might; give me conquering might " (S.7). "Let my body be full of vigour; let my wishes come true. Let my mind firmly resolve to do good; let the Ṛṣi Gharma take his abode in me along with the lustre of the sun, glory of Brahman and the radiance that

shines in all the three worlds" (S.8). "Oh sun, you are self-born and are the brightest ray of light (that bear the name of Hiraṇyagarbha). As you endow people with radiance, please grant me the lustre by the name Brahmavarcas. I am imitating your circular path and am wandering in a circle" (S.9). Another important Mantra describes God as full of glory and as usual the singer wishes to share them (S.10).

2. The Yogic Element. The physiological aspect has not escaped the attention of our fore-fathers.

(a) Concentration of the Mind. One of the etymological meanings of the word Yoga, is joining together. In meditation it is the joining of mind with God or the concentration of mind on God's name. The definition appears to be very simple; but the process is inordinately difficult. By nature the mind is unsteady. It travels on the wings of speed; there is no place which is out of bounds for it. In a fraction of a second, it rockets through space and time – past present and future. It joins itself to an object only to get loosened the next moment. By the time we say the mind is 'here', it is 'there', and till we say it is 'there' it is gone. How to catch hold of this tremulous entity and how to make it steady, are the tormenting questions. One thing, however, is very peculiar with the mind. Once it takes interest in a thing, it remains glued to it. It is therefore the duty of the aspirant, to bring it back from its sojourns and pin it down to the name of God. "From the sea of clarified butter swells up a stream of sweet nectar. Let it reach Agni and attain immortality. I know the secret name of this clarified butter, which becomes immortal – it is 'God's tongue'; the navel of immortality is its other epithet. We are repeating the name of clarified butter in this sacrifice. We continue to offer oblations in the sacrificial fire so that this four-horned, white ox in the form of sacrifice will vomit the clarified butter. Listen to me as I chant the name of this clarified butter with utmost devotion" (S.11). Sāyaṇa understands Brahman by 'clarified butter' and Aum by 'name of clarified butter'. In his ingenius commentary on Taittirīya Āraṇyaka X.10.2 where the same stanza occurs, Sāyaṇa mentions that therein the efficacy of Aum is unambiguously stated. In the above Mantra the name is said to be 'God's tongue' (जिह्वा देवानाम्) and

'naval of immortality' (अमृतस्य नाभिः). Why? Sāyaṇa has his explanation ready. तच्च प्रणवाख्यं नाम देवानां जिह्वा देवैः ध्यानपरैः निरन्तरं उच्चारमाणत्वेन जिह्वा इव सदा मुखमध्ये वर्तते (By constantly uttering the name, gods have made it a co-tenant in their mouths, along with the tongue). Again the name is called अमृतस्य नाभिः as it is the support of total liberation as the naval of the wheel is the support of the chariot (विनाशरहितस्य मोक्षस्य नाभिः रथचक्रस्य नाभिः इव आश्रयभूतं अनेन हि मुक्तिरूपफलं प्राप्यते... एतस्यां ऋचि प्रणवस्य मोक्षसाधनत्वं उक्तम्। In the above hymn, the ox is referred to as vomitting the clarified butter, meaning thereby that the sacrificer gets back the fruit of his sacrifice. Thus does Aum possess the power of leading us Godward. The sweetness of the name of God tempts the mind to be joined to it. "Who is that God whose charming name we should always remember? Who will take me to Aditi so that I can see my father and mother? We should meditate on the name of Agni who stands foremost among the gods. He will lead me to Aditi so that I can see my father and mother" hopes Muni Ājīgarti Śunaḥśepa (S.12). Constant remembrance of the name of God must be resorted to in order to be free from the bondage of this world. Madhva, in his Ṛgbhāṣya, points out that Śunaḥśepa did this in order to free himself from the pillar (यूपात् आत्मविमोक्षाय स्तुवन् देवान् पृथक् पृथक्). This helps the aspirant to have a vision of Viṣṇu and Lakṣmī—the father and mother of the universe (कर्तुः परानंदतनोरिदानीं मनामहे चारु विष्णोः सुराणां नामेशः चेत् इन्दिरायै पुनर्ददृशेयं तां मातरं तं च देवं... स एव माता पिता च देवः तस्मिन् सदा संस्थिताः तत् पुनर्दात्). The chanting of God's name with one-pointed devotion and deep concentration is the basic necessity. "Oh singers of God's praises, propitiate with adoration from the depth of your being, God Viṣṇu, the primordial substance" (S.13). "Oh Indra, right on being born, you made your mind steady and firm. Though you were alone, you slayed many an enemy in the battle. You destroyed mountains and won an unsizable number of cows" (S.14). Meditation on the name of God implies that one is always 'awake to God'.[1] "There are seven Ṛṣis in the body. They are always alert and they protect the body. When a man goes to sleep they are absorbed in the Atman. At that time, Prāṇa and Apāna that are the *elan vital* and that know no sleep, are perfectly

awake in the body" (S.15). The seven Ṛṣis are said to be the nose, tongue, eye, skin, ear, speech and mind. The protectors are Prāṇa and Apāna. "I am bringing back the mind of the aspirant, which refuses to be controlled inspite of great effort and which darts swiftly to heaven, to earth, to all the four directions, to the great ocean, to the rays of the sun, to waters, herbs and plants, to the sun, dawn and to mountains, to the remote corners of the universe and to the past and present times" (S.16). This fickle mind, once made steady, works wonders. "The learned devotees who have complete control over their minds have moved Agni with the help of concentration, in order that Agni should accept their offerings", says the sage Virupa Āngirasa (S.17). "Prajāpati, the inspirer and creator, first concentrated his mind and with a great insight, determined that Agni is most essential for all beings to achieve their purposes. He, therefore, popularised the keeping of Agni on the earth. We work under the command of Savitṛ who inspires all. We concentrate our minds and continue the practice of keeping the sacred fire burning, for that constitutes the way to heaven" (S.18). But keen application of mind is not an easy affair. It must be done with the assistance of God. "I invoke the supreme Lord for an all-comprehending mind; Mātariśvan, for equalising inhalation and exhalation; Surya, for a clear vision; the deity of mid-region, for a clear audition and the deity of earth, for a sound body; for a good power of speech I invoke the goddess Saraswatī, who is intimately connected with the mind" (S.19).

(b) The Psycho-physiological Aspect. Concentration is a psycho-physiological process. The dual task of controlling both mind and body can be accomplished by means of Yoga which, as the Yoga-sūtra definition goes, is cessation of all mental modifications योगः चित्तवृत्तिनिरोधः (I. 2). One point, however, must be remembered while discussing the nature of Yoga. A clear-cut distinction must be made between the control of mind due to discrimination (विवेकज्ञान) or realisation of Brahman (ब्रह्मात्मैक्य) on the one hand, and the control of mind by suppression of all its activities on the other. The former state is positive bliss while the latter is negative in as much as there is only absence of sorrow. "No doubt, one feels a sort of pleasure in such Samādhi on account of the

absence of worries consequent upon the withdrawal of the mind from external objects, but this does not indicate that the Yogī has realised the supreme Truth".[1] In fact, "the Yogis think that misery is caused by the activities of the mind. Hence they direct all their energy to the suppression of the Vṛttis of the mind. But the Vṛttis reappear if the attempt is slightly relaxed. The Yogis on account of their ignorance of the real nature of the mind, fight with their own shadows. The Jñānī, on the other hand, realises the mind as well as all its activities as identical with the non-dual Brahman".[2] This is not to devalue Yogic practice which is highly useful; but one has to remember that the goal is not mere concentration but realisation of Brahman. Yogic practices are an aid and not the goal. We do not find in the Vedas any elaborate or exact knowledge of Yogic physiology; but many of the Mantras are suggestive and commentators have read in these verses the rudiments of Yogic doctrines. "Which are the three wheels of your triangular chariot? Where are the three planks to be used as a seat? Oh Aświns, when will you harness the horse by name Rāsbha to your chariot by riding which you go for a sacrifice?" asks Ṛṣi Hiraṇyastūpa Āngirasa (S.20). A summary of the Yogic interpretation of this Mantra by a celebrated Yogin of the 16th century Shrichandra Maharaj in his Yoga-pradīpa goes as follows: "The word Trivṛta in the Mantra refers to the body as composed of the three elements, fire, water and earth, and is termed a chariot (Ratha). We do not know the exact location of the three lower plexuses (Tricakra) situated in the body, namely Mūlādhāra, Svādhiṣṭhāna and Maṇipūra; neither do we know the place of the vital air. We are denied the knowledge of the three upper plexuses viz. Anahata, Visuddha and Ajna along with their confluence in the thousand-petalled lotus (Sanīla) which is the abode of lord Siva. We are equally ignorant even of the time of the union (Yoga) of the great serpent power, with the highest Lord who is omnipotent, self-effulgent and bliss as such, and who shines by the sport (Rāsbha) of this absorption. Oh indestructible Śiva-sakti, you are verily our

1 The Māṇḍūkyopanishad with Gauḍapāda's Kārikā and Śamkara's commentary. Tr. by Swami Nikhilananda, Sri Rāmakrishna Ashram, Mysore, 1995, P. 204

2 Ibid, P. 202

father and mother; may I know by your grace the entire process of union with the ultimate reality." ((त्रिवृतः) त्रिवृद्भूतकार्यस्य तेजोऽवन्नविकारस्य, (रथस्य) शरीरस्य 'शरीरं रथमेव तु' इति श्रुतेः (त्रीचक्रा) त्रीणि चक्राणि अधस्तनानि मूलाधारस्वाधिष्ठानमणिपूराभिधानि (क्व) कुत्र वर्तन्ते, तेषां स्थानविशेषः क इति न अस्माभिर्ज्ञायते, (बन्धुरः) बन्धुजीवपुष्पसन्निभो रक्तवर्णो जीवधारकः कन्दर्पाभिधो वायुः त्रिकोण शक्तिपीठमध्यवर्ती क्वेति सम्बन्धः (सनीळाः) नीडं ब्रह्मरंध्रस्योपरि वर्तमानं सहस्त्रारं पद्मं शिववासस्थानं तेन सहिताः (त्रयः) उपरितनचक्रविशेषाः अनाहतविशुद्धाज्ञानामकाः क्व कुत्रेत्यपि च न ज्ञायते (वाजिनः) बलशालिनः सर्वशक्ति-संपन्नस्य (रास्भस्य) रासेन रसप्रचुरेण आनंदघनेन स्वात्मना भासमानस्य, आनन्दघन स्वप्रकाशस्य रासो रासलीला शिवशक्तिसंगमलक्षणा सर्वरसाधारभूता, ततः शोभमानस्य वा शिवस्य (योगः) कुलकुण्डलिनीरूपया शक्त्या समं सम्बन्धः योगशास्त्रोपदिष्टषट्चक्र-भेदनादिक्रिया-कौशलेन प्रबोधितायाः कुलकुण्डलिनीरूपाया महाशक्तेः सहस्त्रार-पद्ममध्यवर्तिनि भगवति शिवे लय इति यावत्, (येन) लययोगेन (यज्ञं) यजनं मिथः सङ्गमनम् 'यज देवपूजासङ्गतिकरणदानेषु' इति धातुपाठः (नासत्या) सर्वदा वर्तमानौ शक्तिशिवौ, युवां (उपयाथः) उपगच्छथः संयोगः, (कदा) कस्मिन् काले इत्यपि न ज्ञायते, अपि मातापितरौ शक्तिशिवौ, युष्मत् प्रसादात् अस्मिन् पिण्डे कस्य चक्रस्य किं स्थानं का अधिष्ठात्री देवी कियन्ति दलानि को वर्णो मूलाधारपद्मस्थ-कुण्डलिनी-शक्तेः सहस्रदलपद्मस्थशिवे लयगमनसमयश्च क इत्येतत् सर्वमवगतं भवतु, अवगत्य च तथानुतिष्ठेयं भवत्करुणयेति भावः).[1] It is really wonderful how the seer of the hoary past could 'look into' the body and think of three wheels. Today the physiology of the Cakras (plexuses) is well grasped. But their mention, though indirectly, is witness to the intelligence and insight of the sage of unrecorded past. From the commentary of Shricandra Maharaj, it becomes clear that Yogic physiology was still an enigma to him. The process of controlling the senses is suggested in yet another poem. "I am opening with the weapon of knowledge the knots of your seven Prāṇas and eight nerve centres. Be you a messenger of Agni and approach Yama. I will keep a place for you in Agni. Let this Agni enter the body. Let speech achieve the Prāṇa" (S.21). The destruction of the seven Prāṇas implies the control of the senses and the opening of eight nerve-centres is the

1 Quoted in the article वेदों में योग by Swami Gangeshvarananda, in the Yoganka of Kalyan, (Second edition) P.86

piercing of eight plexuses of the body, i.e. making clear the way for the Kuṇḍalinī. We also come across an allegorical description of this process. "Oh Agni, you have seven kinds of fuel, you display seven tongues of flame like Kālī, Karālī etc.; seven Ṛṣis including Marīchi know you, you are fond of seven places like Āhavanīya and others. Seven priests like Mitra and Varuṇa who officiate at the sacrifice, worship you with seven kinds of sacrifice beginning with Agniṣṭoma. Oh Agni, let your seven repositories get their fill of clarified butter" (S.22). The fuel here is interpreted[1] as the objects of senses (or sometimes as seven cranial nerves); the tongues of flame are the energies of the senses; the places are the seats of the senses and so on. The purport of the Mantra is that the objects of senses are to be sacrificed and Brahman is to be attained. "The body is a well having ten mechanisms, viz. two eyes, two ears, mind, speech, the incoming breath, the outgoing breath and the two regular outlets directed towards elimination" (S.23). This is the human body with different orifices; the self lives in it and the knower of that self attains to Brahman. It is remarkable that the Ṛṣi shows a deep insight into human physiology. There is an explicit reference to different parts of the body — both visible and not visible — as also to sense-organs, to different feelings and to vital breaths. Control of bodily functions which is of fundamental importance in Yogic physiology is also clearly stated in Kena Sūkta of Atharvaveda. In this context specific mention must be made of the two Yogic stages, namely, posture and breath-control. "The seeker (Atharvan or he whose mind is not fickle but is steady) in a steady posture fixes his head so as to bring it in line with his heart and then channelises his vital breath into the Brahmarandhra. The head of such a Yogin is a veritable treasure-house of gods. The vital breath, food and mind protect it quite securely. Puruṣa expands in all directions and pervades all the quarters. He who knows the citadel of Brahman knows that he is called Puruṣa on account of his residence in the citadel. He who knows that citadel which is full of nectar is endowed with real knowledge, clear vision, vital breath and good progeny. He does not lose his eyesight and vital energy before old age. Here is the

1 cf. Śaṁkara's commentary on Muṇḍakopaniṣad II. 1.8

invulnerable city of gods with eight plexuses and nine doors. It is radiant with blissful light. Inside it there is a shining house supported by three spokes. In that resplendent house there is a mysterious being infused with Atman. Only the illumined souls realise that Being. That invulnerable radiant fortress teeming with overwhelming light does away with all sorts of miseries. In that city Brahman takes its residence" (S.24).

There are a number of stanzas where only the senses or the Prānas are mentioned with an implied suggestion of channelising them Godward. For example, "Indra has two horses. The wise say that the horses are harnessed with a clear understanding that they are meant for sacrifice" (S.25). The two horses are Prāṇa and Apāna and they are to be yoked to the task of meditation. This constitutes sacrifice. We may note here that this is the essense of what the saint of Umadi meant by entwining the name of God with the in-coming and the out-going breath. God's name should be uttered with Prāṇa and Apāna, with each breath that comes in and with every breath that goes out. Such kind of putting them to the service of God constitutes real sacrifice. On the whole, we find a mention of different organs of the body in a symbolic fashion. There is no explicit account of the physiological processes involved in the Yogic exercises. Whatever is present in the Vedas is the barest minimum. However, it is sufficient to serve as a foundation of the great superstructure built later by the Yoga system. In the Vedas there is a suggestion here and a suggestion there; while the Upaniṣads have a much more systematic view to present.

(c) Symbolic Description of Yogic Exercises. The practice of Yoga or spiritual pursuit is often symbolised by sacrifice in the Vedas. Agni, the deity of sacrifice, therefore, assumes an unparalleled significance. Help is sought from him. "Oh Agni, Atharvan has brought you from heaven to earth; he has revealed you by churning waters", observes the sage Bārhaspatya Bharadwāja (S.26). This is understood as manifestation of light in the devotee's mind. In another Ṛk, we have a reference to the process of yoking two horses to the chariot. "This brilliance at the centre can travel through the length and breadth of the universe. Bright orbs are surrounding it

and are twinkling in the sky. Servicemen are yoking horses to his chariot. The horses are so beautiful that they immediately create a desire in the spectator's mind. They are reddish in colour and ready to gallop. They are strong enough to carry the chariot in which the valiant God is sitting" (S.27). The whole process means yoking Prāṇa and Apāna to lead the aspirant to God. Madhvācārya in his Ṛg-bhāṣya has identified these horses with Manas (Mind) and Buddhi (Intellect). When they are working together, i.e. when the mind has turned its back on the senses, it is sure to reach God. Requests are multiplied. "Let Sadasaspati, without whose grace no sacrifice can be successful, bestow intellect on us" (S.28). This is an intellect which has attained to full concentration. Savitṛ helps man achieve mental concentration for entering the region of light (S.29). This Savitṛ must, therefore, be given oblation by means of speech, hearing and mind (S.30). Distant is the goal and hard the path. Victory can be won only by the two-pronged attack of rigorous penance and bounteous grace. Thus the sage Kutsa Āngirasa assures: "Oh you sons of Sudhanvan, my ancestors, though yet immature, you had resorted to the pathway for felicity, and after a long and strenuous journey, you ultimately reached the home of the divine Savitṛ. Inspired by devotion, you approached him and beheld him face to face; and the divine creator (Savitṛ) bestowed immortality upon you. The sole ladle designed for testing divine nectar was fashioned by you into four" (S.31). If this Mantra stresses self-effort, the following one emphasises grace. "Let all the objects that we need be gifted to us. Let the Lord stand near us in our effort to achieve wealth. Let him give a proper direction to our intellect" (S.32). Mere concentration of mind is not enough unless it is touched with divinity.

3. The Emotional Element. The trump card in the game is the bond between man and God; man's wish to enter into the zone of His love. The energies of the mind flow to God. Before a devotee, the temptations of the world are spread in vain. Such attachment to God and detachment from world constitutes the emotional element.

(a) Bhāva.What is important in the process of meditation is devotion or Bhāva of the aspirant. Without this life-blood meditation

remains pale and limp. It lacks the dynamic energy to carry us through. The lordliness and benevolence of the deity command the feeling of reverence. This helps Bhāva. "Indra alone deserves to be approached by all. I pay homage to him. Let him be pleased by my singing. Himself strong, he makes his devotees strong. Full of truth and manliness his nature is unfathomable. He is the victorious sovereign" (S.33). Mortal man should look to Indra in his struggle for abundance" (S.34). "Your demeanour is solemn. The El Dorado of your riches is beyond our poor imagination" (S.35). Along with feeling of respectful love for God comes the consciousness of our own littleness. "Our understanding falls short of grasping your remarkable sway which has enveloped the entire creation" (S.36). A reverence-whippped poem runs: "None like you, Oh Indra, was ever born in the heavens or on the earth and none will ever be born. We, who seek cows and horses, prestige and wisdom, offer prayers to you" (S.37). The outstanding bearing of the Lord to whom the aspirant automatically goes into submission is a topic of many poems. "The bow and arrow in your hand enhance your superior status. The rainbow-coloured garlands of flowers add to your radiance. It is through your generosity that you broadcast compassion on the wide world. Oh Rudra, none can compete with you in matters of prowess and glory" (S.38). For achieving prosperity an aspirant would befriend Indra and Indra alone (S.39). With bubbling eagerness Śrutakakṣa Angirasa chants: "Sing on, Oh seekers, the valient deeds of Indra who partakes of your Soma offerings, who is all-conquering (शतक्रतु), who is lauded and invited by many, who is a hero of epics and renowned of old. Proclaim that his name is Indra" (S.40). Indra is a giver of light and knowledge.

It is not without reason that Spinoza characterised the love which man has for God as the same as the love which God has for man and ultimately which man has for man. This mutual love, love of man for God which is full of veneration and the love of God for man which is nothing but blessing, is expressed by many a religious song. "I sacrifice for you and sing praises. Be a pillar of strength to me" (S.41). We find a Ṛk which prescribes a somewhat novel way. "Oh Viśvakarman, let the friendly priests know all the three

of your bodies, the superior, the middle and the inferior. Vitalise your own body and offer worship to yourself" (S.42). Mahīdhara, a celebrated commentator on the Vājasaneyi Samhitā, remarks: "man is incompetent to honour the creator and so the worship must be performed by Himself ".[1] Incidentally, स्वयं यजस्व (worship yourself) may also mean—'offer yourself as a gift'. In Nirukta we are given a history. "Viśvakarman, the son of Bhuvana performed a सर्वमेध sacrifice. He gave away everything on earth and in the end offered himself as libation" (S.43). This sacrifice is referred to in a verse in Ṛgveda (S.44).

Love is a great binding force and it is but natural that Gods run to the place where the devotees gather. "Oh high-souled Soma, flow rapidly. Come to us with your cherished halo. Let the words 'I am there' be on your lips" (S.45). One is impressed by the sparkle and gaiety of these words of Bṛhanmati Angirasa. Sages long to have God in their vicinity. "We mortals kneel before the learned Agni to come and take our charge. Oh Agni, the sage Vatsa catches your attention from the high heavens" (S.46). Once God owns a devotee, He will not forsake him at the critical moment. The Ṛṣis adore the valour of Indra who sides with his devotees at the time of a pitched battle. "Oh learned men, I have heard that it is Indra alone who can distribute trophies in an equitable way. He is our only solace in times of adversity. Let him grant us what we yearn for" (S.47).

Bhāva is after all a complex conception and no simple definition can analyse its constitution. It is love and faith. It is turning away from the tantalising world. It is stepping out of illusions and straightening the crookedness of mind. It is seeing God in all that surrounds us and thriving on an overwhelming adoration for him. In fine, it is an intellectual conviction that God is all in all, an emotional belongingness to Him and a voluntary surrender to Him. In Bhāva, all the three faculties — intellect, affection and volition, are engulfed by the holy Being. With Bhāva, God is not away; without it all worship is an empty show.

(b) Surrendering Oneself to God. The lode-star of our actions

1 See Ralph T.H.Griffith, The Hymns of the Ṛgveda, Vol II, Munshiram Manoharlal, 54 Rani Jhansi Road, New Delhi-55, P.497, Note 5

must be God. "Even our incoming and outgoing breath must be directed to God" (S.48). "One who sacrifices, pours libations, bakes cakes for offering and sings in His honour, is a favourite of Indra" (S.49). Only men of dull intellects (दभ्रचेताः) disregard the divine cow who is a connoisseur in poetry, who utters sacred words, who is virtuous and who has come here only for the service of Gods" (S.50). This shows that only the fools fail to put their speech (cow) to proper use and instead of uttering the name of God, they waste words on trifling things. The devotee sincerely pleads that he belongs to God and to none else. "We are yours, Oh Indra. Give them refuge who praise you and who offer you gifts. Let them rest happily even in old age in their own houses" (S.51). The final resting place is at the feet of the Almighty. An unnamable fascination drags the devotee to God. "Our praises would reach your ears however distant you may be. We will swiftly come into your presence (अरं गमाम)" (S.52). An important corrollary from the feeling of surrender is the intense desire to offer to God the thing which is dearest to oneself. Real fondness for God, entails relinquishing choicest objects for His sake. "Protect him, Oh Indra, who gives away the gifts that are most dear to him. We pray to you, let all our friends be free from sins" (S.53). The way to salvation lies through a feeling of resignation. This is a perorative refrain of yet another hymn. "Oh Agni, let his life be vanquished who is a sinner and who wants to enslave us by means of eyes, mind and thoughts. Salvation is a fruit of self-surrender. You are an abode of Indra. With all my speed, with all the powers at my command, with all my mental abilities, with all that I possess, I surrender to you and enter into you. You are a refuge of Indra, with all my speed.... I enter into you. You are a shelter of Indra. With all my speed.... I enter into you. You are a shield of Indra.... I enter into you" (S.54). The tenderness of mind outruns egoism.

More important than external gifts are internal gifts. When praises are accorded to gods in words, these words must be carriers of the deep faith of the aspirant. This is the attitude of a person whose moral sense is not slumbering. Ṛṣi Nodhas Gautama's lyric runs: "I am offering libations to the deity. I am offering a beautiful song to him who kills the enemies in no time. The wise have presented

him with glorificatory stanzas with all their heart, with all their mind and with all their imagination" (S.55). Sāyaṇa interprets the word हृदा as heart; मनसा as that which is inside the heart and मनीषा as the knowledge which flows from the mind. In this way all mental powers are channelised towards God. It is interesting to note that the Kaṭhopaniṣad later picked up the words, हृदा, मनसा and मनीषा and yet refused to grant fruitfulness to them in the matter of God-realisation, by claiming that they are all inadequate.[1] Be it so. The present couplet only stresses the importance of laying all possessions at God's feet. "Oh you creator of the universe, you are the first promulgator of the moral law. I present to you all that I have. Even in our old age we shall cross this life by means of the legacy of sacrifice (fruit of meditation)", says Ṛṣi Bhṛgu (S.56). A very sincere devotee pleads that he does not have any material gifts to offer and so he offers his own mind with fervid devotion. "I do not possess a cow, nor do I have an axe to cut the sacrificial sticks. However, all that I have, I bring to you" (S.57). The mind itself is to be offered as an oblation, for this verily is the most valuable gift of a devotee. All material things are to be given by the mind and not merely by hand. The mind will have to detach itself from that possession; if it hovers round the thing which is accorded away, the act is hollow. Non-attachment sanctifies gifts. "Knower of the whole creation, you are the knower of all actions too. I offer to you the libation which is made sacred by mind and heart. Accept them" (S.58). The words हृदा and मनसा occur here also. The lyric describes the deity as a knower of actions (वयुनानि विद्वान्) and this suggests that God knows the quality of our actions, which is obviously determined by our sincere devotion. The Lord values the devotion and not the actual consideration. Even with intense devotion some vestige of expectation remains; some hope for a trophy still lingers. "With your support, we shall resist our enemy. You are ours and we are yours" (S.59). "We along with sages pray to you for help, Oh Mitra and Varuṇa. You possess an all-embracing vision. By your grace, we may successfully try for the kingdom of self, which is

1 See, R.D. Ranade, A Constructive Survey of Upanishadic Philosophy, Pp. 248-249

infinitely vast and yet the only one worthy of our steel" (S.60).

4. Nine Kinds of Bhakti. The usual classification of Bhakti or devotion is a nine-fold one: Śravaṇa (listening to the name and exploits of God), Kīrtana (singing His praises), Smaraṇa (uttering the name of God), Pādasevana (physical service of God), Arcana (worship), Vandana (prostrating before Him), Dāsya (service of God), Sakhya (friendliness with God) and Ātmanivedana (complete surrender to Him). Often their shades mingle and no devotional mood can be fitted exclusively into one single pigeon-hole. We find in the Vedas rudiments of these different Bhaktis.

(a) Śravaṇa : We have to listen to the utterance of God's name whenever and wherever possible. "Oh Indra, bearer of sacred spiritual words (names), new devotees who are inquisitive to know about you, intently listen to your glorious deeds. Thereafter they in turn relate them devoutly to others as far as they know" (S.61). Hearing of auspicious news comes as a balm of peace. "Let me be always hearing about the brave deeds of gods even from afar. Never should my power of hearing be impaired or lost" (S.62).

(b) Kīrtana : By far the most vigorously practised type of Bhakti in the Vedas is Kīrtana or singing the name of God. Kīrtana is more effective than other types. Singing includes hearing. Even a lone singer is listening to his own words. Thus two sense organs, viz. speech and hearing, are working in collaboration. If there is group singing coloured by a musical tinge it soothes a man's nerves. The charm of musical instruments enhances the sweetness of the name. "With righteousness, meditation and laudatory songs, the devotees loudly extol the valiant and efficient Soma" (S.63). Their wits sharpened on the grindstone of devotion, the sages pour out a bewildering variety of ovations. Addressed to a large number of deities, these prayers, decked with beautiful descriptions of nature, spotlight the majesty of the Creator. They display a high literary quality. The Vedas can well be called the *locus classicus* of the Kīrtana Bhakti, though, paradoxically, the word Bhakti is not popular in the Vedas and the performance of Kīrtana as we understand today is not specifically mentioned. "He who offers oblations to Viṣṇu, the

omnipresent lord, ancient and unborn, ever fresh and creator of this universe, is endowed with plenitude in this life and attains to the highest ideal of human existence" (S.64). "Viṣṇu measures out all the terrestrial regions and supports the highest heavens. He traverses the entire universe in three steps" (S.65). The seeker wishes that God's fondness for him is always on the increase (S.66). "Oh Mitra and Varuṇa, when others give expression to their meditative applause, we also sing the Uktha Mantras with reverence" (S.67). Ṛṣi Śamyu Bārhaspatya commands the devotee to utter Arka and Sāma hymns to adore Indra (S.68). Then there are requests appended to the praises. "We want our eyes to feast upon your beautiful form by residing in your joyous region" (S.69). This expresses a longing for God's nearness. The naturalness of these demands is the marvel.

(c) Smaraṇa : We also find in the Vedic hymns, traces of Smaraṇa Bhakti. "Learned men move your heart by meditating on you. Let our encomiums glorify you" (S.70). Again, "We, your earnest devotees—mortals though we are—mostly engage ourselves in meditating on your name. You are omniscient and immortal" (S.71).

(d) Pādasevana : It is very difficult to distinguish between Pādasevana and Arcana. Pādasevana, again, is very near to Dāsya. No single hymn, therefore, can be cited as exclusively exemplifying one type of Bhakti. Mantras like the following can be illustrative of Pādasevana Bhakti. "Devotees with all humility take recourse to the holy feet of the Lord and obtain unblemished fame. Thereafter they realised the sacred names and enjoyed your auspicious vision" (S.72). "For the acquisition of spiritual bliss devotees offer adoration at your feet. Wearing a beautiful vesture, as radiant as the sun, Oh valiant Indra, you became a source of great inspiration to your devotees" (S.73).

(e) Arcana : Man is indeed a worshipping animal. He folds his hands whenever he meets with excellence. Worship may or may not have any material; intense devotion is sufficient, and of devotion the sages had a double dose. "I worship the sun (Savitṛ) who is the protector, who creates heaven and earth, who is learned and who is a great doer. He inspires truth, supports delightful objects, is lovable

and deserves to be meditated upon" (S.74). God is all-pervading and to say that he resides in a particular place is to limit him. Inspite of different places having been assigned to God, He really resides in man's heart. In his Ṛg-vidhāna, Śaunaka says, "The sages have prescribed the worship of God as immanent in six abodes : waters, fire, heart, sun, altar or images. For those who are given to rituals, God resides in Agni; for the intellectual, He is in the high heavens; for the dull-witted, He takes lodgement in images; whereas for the Yogins, He has His abode in their very hearts". Again, "Oh men, worship lord Indra with melodious songs; sing, Oh Priyamedhas, with worshipful reverence. Let children also join in idolising Indra, who is mighty and strong like an invulnerable fortress" (S.75). Indra is vast, ageless, sublime and ever youthful. Even heaven and earth have failed to measure the greatness of this holy lord and they will ever fail to do so" asserts Muni Gāthina Viśvāmitra (S.76).

(f) Vandana : Lying prostrate or saluting is a universal way of showing respect. It takes various forms on different soils and at different times, but the underlying humility made much more appealing by a touch of sincerity is the same. "Salutation is itself penance. I practise that penance. The heaven and earth are sustained by austerities" (S.77). "Salutation to the great and to the small; to the old and to the young. Let us be hale and hearty to perform sacrifice" (S.78). It is sterling merit, and not age or position or intelligence that claims a reverential attitude. A famous anthem runs : Veneration to the Rudra who assumes a mild form and to Rudra who assumes a terrible form. Veneration to Rudra who blows away enemies from near and from afar without effort and to Rudra who with shining locks of hair, looks like a wish-tree with branches in all directions. Veneration to Rudra who carries us across mundane existence" (S.79). Rudra is also adored in his ugly forms and cosmic forms (S.80). We may particularly note how the Vedic seers could feel the presence of God in the minutest operation of nature. There is no sphere of life where God's healing touch is not found, no type of work where His active initiative is not traceable, no kind of growth where His nurturing hand is absent. "I bow to the Rudra who is on the other side of the river of existence (i.e. who has attained Jivanmukti) and to the Rudra who is on this side of the river (i.e.

who is manifest in the worldly life). I bow to the Rudra who abides in renowned sacred places and to the Rudra who has his habitat on the bank of a small well. I bow to the Rudra who looks with a fond eye on tiny blades of grass and to the Rudra who loves the foam on the waters of a river" (S.81). Invocations are addressed to gods and an award is expected in return (S.82). The seekers are confident that by the power of their intense devotion they are approximating God. "Oh Agni, we devotees, with minds fixed on you day and night, are with humble obeisance coming nearer and nearer to you day by day" (S.83).

(g) Dāsya : Service is a prominent manifestation of love. The greater the love, the more sincere and disinterested the service. The loving God has never hesitated in serving devotees in their distress. By driving Arjuna's horses he has earned for Himself the epithet Pārthasārathī which is a seal-mark recognising the genuineness of service. It is next to impossible to reach the ideal of service which God renders to his devotees, for He serves out of pure love, serves without expectation of fruit, serves even in the absence of a word of gratitude from the devotees, serves in any capacity and at any odd time and place and sometimes without letting the devotee know that he is being served. Humanity, in its own way has produced great servants of God. A poem says : "Oh Agni, I am your servant like those who serve rich men" (S.84). To love God is to obey His commands. "I am innocent. With all my abilities, I serve Varuṇa who fulfils our desires and who nourishes the world. The great Varuṇa gives wisdom to the simple. The wise Varuṇa makes his servants rich" (S.85). The utilitarian in the Vedic seer, however, does expect that his service be recognised; and for that matter, not only recognised but rewarded. "Offer a beautiful hymn to that great God who is terror to his enemies, who is forceful, yet very kind. Pour out solemn orisons to Indra. He will never fail to notice your service" (S.86). Again, "We are engaged in your service day in and day out. We deem it our duty. All our hopes are concentrated on you" (S.87). Ṛṣi Somāhuti Bhārgava pleads that he is eager to serve God (S.88).

(h) Sakhya : Who but a man of high spiritual stature be a friend of God? Relation of friendship flourishes on a basis of equality. The

naturalism of the Vedas fights shy of the *Mysterium Tremendum* — the mysterious terrible super-entity — the idea weaved into the texture of philosophy of religion by Rudolf Otto. The gods of Vedic people are somewhat exalted beings, making it easy to strike friendship with them. "Oh Soma of pleasant form, lord of green herbs, be an enricher of treasures unto us, as a friend to a friend" (S.89). "We begin cultivating your friendship, Oh Indra. Destroy the strings on the bows of our enemies" (S.90). What touches us is the childlike simplicity of the request. The number of hymns asking for friendship of gods is very vast. But in almost all of them the desire to reap fruit from the friendship is invariably present. "Oh Soma, be you comforting to our hearts as a father to a son or a friend to friend" (S.91). Soma is entreated to grant health, wealth and his own friendship (S.92). The desire for affluence is present in every other verse. "Oh slayer of Vṛtra, let us be united for the sake of gaining victory. Even irreligious men should accept us" (S.93). The Vedic aspirants are not less interested in good thoughts than in good things. Wretched thoughts are enemies, while holy thoughts are friends. "May noble thoughts come to us from all sides, undistorted, unhampered and overflowing, may we live in friendship with gods" (S.94). "Oh Soma, let not our speech be defiled by ignoble utterances. Give us contentment; be our friend" (S.95). The sage does not fail to accord eulogies to gods when pleading for a helping hand and he is confirmed in his devotion.

(j) Atmanivedana : Rāmadāsa the outspoken Maharashtra saint stated that it is vain to call oneself a devotee if one has not fully given oneself over to God. Offering one's whole being to God (Ātmanivedana) is the finest type of Bhakti. "I have completely given over my mind to you; sit like a king at the celebration of sacrifice conducted in your honour" is a prayer of Krsna Āngirasa (S.96).

5. Company of the Good. Meditation in the company of saints is a social affair and one automatically reaps many advantages in collective meditation. Devotion becomes more intense by the two processes of social facilitation and circularity of response. Psychologists have experimentally found out that when we are working in a group, our performance becomes better. It may be because a

person, when in company, is ashamed to be lazy and puts in more effort; or it may be due to a competitive spirit that may enter into one's mind when every body around is working. It is clear that the sight and sound of others doing the same thing have their effects on us. This is social facilitation. The other process is circularity of response, whereby the effects of social stimulation increase themselves by a kind of mutually exciting reverberation.[1] These two processes make meditation in the company of other aspirants more effective and therefore, more desirable. The sages call upon like-minded friends to come and take part in their sacrifices and singing. "Come, Oh you generous Maruts, the presiding deities of the sacrifice which is to be performed in the house (Gṛhayajña); come with your protective strength. Do not go back. This sacrifice is being celebrated for your sake, Oh Maruts, who have all power at your command, who are omniscient and have the lustre of the sun" (S.97). "You are pure, and hence pure oblations are offered to you. Oh Maruts, I perform a pure Adhwara sacrifice for you. On account of your strict adherence to moral law you have realised the truth and accordingly have acquired the power to purify others" (S.98).

The righteous souls not only enrich the sanctity of the sacrifice but also sustain the moral law. "When prayers are being sung for gods, the devotees, wearing sacred symbols, gather around for the holy function. Their ancient father is ever present there to protect the divine assembly from any harm. When the almighty Varuṇa clouded the whole of mid-region, only those who were given to meditation were able to remain with him" (S.99). "Top-ranking leaders possessing indomitable courage and endowed with glorious character are alone able to protect the moral principles, with no ill-feeling towards any body", says the sage Matsya Sāmmada (S.100). Again, "The Maruts whose horses have coloured spots, whose mother is Pṛṣṇī, and whose desire it is to do good to everyone, should be present here. Let Manu and others whose tongue the fire is, who meditate on the sun, come along" (S.101). Devout worshippers, whose spiritual achievements are spreading far and wide, and who follow the right path, are called upon to offer prayers to the heaven

1 See F.H. Allport, Social Psychology, Houghton Mifflin Company, New York, 1924, P.301

and the earth (S.102). Those who follow the path where gods have left their footprints, constitute the right company. "Enrich us, Oh divine Vājins by gifting to us food and wealth whenever there is such an opportunity. You are talented, immortal and you know the truth. Partake of the sweet juice and proceed along the path of gods" (S.103). They alone are worthy of friendship who are friends of gods. Their company is sought after by the wise (S.104). One should not converse with him who is a confidant trickster and who utters unholy words, but must exchange words with a devotee of God. One should be submissive to him alone who has achieved all the four goals of life and who possesses spiritual wealth. One should not speak ill of him, is the advice of Kaṇva Ghaura (S.105). Selfless souls always wish to oblige others. None can destroy them, on the contrary they destroy the wicked (S.106). "The saintly persons sit for meditation in gatherings of spiritual seekers and enjoy the blissful experience of the ancient and ageless divinity. They are also endowed with supersensuous spiritual powers. Yet while behaving with others they are full of love and respect" (S.107). This is the importance of meditation in the assembly of saints.

As the aspirant makes progress in meditation, he is imbued with a feeling of reverence towards God. Understood in the Kantian sense, reverence is a compound of two feelings, viz. exaltation and humility; exaltation, because man is essentially divine and humility, because he is at the same time a creature of sensibility. The divine nature and the empirical nature are antagonistic in the beginning but the latter is to be raised to the level of the former. The process of restructuring begins when we are initiated into spiritual life; it gathers momentum by the force of augmented meditation and culminates in complete transmutation of our lower nature. The feeling of reverence which gives us a peep into Reality elevates us by loosening us from the gravitational force of desires. And this it does, not by cutting itself asunder from passions, not by suppressing the passions, but by sublimating them. "Reverence, in short, is the appearance of the moral consciousness, in the region of the sensuous feeling, in which it *must* appear if it is to realise itself in finite beings like us".[1]

1 Edward Caird, The Critical Philosophy of Immanuel Kant, Vol II, Pp 257 - 258

SOURCES-VII

1. यस्येदं प्रदिशि यद् विरोचते प्र चानति वि च चष्टे शचीभिः।
पुरा देवस्य धर्मणा सहोभिः विष्णुमगन्वरुणं पूर्वहूतिः।। अथर्ववेद VII.25.2

2. यो भूतानामधिपतिर्यस्मिन् लोका अधि श्रिताः।
ये ईशे महतो महान् तेन गृह्णामि त्वामहम् मयि गृह्णामि त्वामहम्।। यजुर्वेद XX.32

3. भूयानरात्याः शच्याः पतिस्त्वमिन्द्रासि विभूः प्रभूरिति त्वोपास्महे वयम्।।
अम्भो अमो महः सह इति त्वोपास्महे वयम्।
अम्भो अरुणं रजतं रजः सह इति त्वोपास्महे वयम्।
उरुः पृथुः सुभूर्भुव इति त्वोपास्महे वयम्।
प्रथो वरो व्यचो लोक इति त्वोपास्महे वयम्।
भवद्वसुरिदद्वसुः संयद्वसुरायद्वसुरिति त्वोपास्महे वयम्।
अथर्ववेद XIII.4.47, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54

4. श्रीश्च ते लक्ष्मीश्च पत्न्यावहोरात्रे पार्श्वे नक्षत्राणि रूपमश्विनौ व्यात्तम्।
इष्णन्निषाणामुं म इषाण सर्वलोकं म इषाण।। यजुर्वेद XXXI.22

5. रुचं नो धेहि ब्राह्मणेषु रुचं राजसु नस्कृधि।
रुचं विश्येषु शूद्रेषु मयि धेहि रुचा रुचम्।। यजुर्वेद XVIII.48

6. त्वमग्ने व्रतपा असि देव आ मर्त्येष्वा। त्वं यज्ञेष्वीड्यः।। ऋग्वेद VIII.11.1

7. तेजः असि तेजो मयि धेहि। वीर्यमसि वीर्यं मयि धेहि।
बलमसि बलं मयि धेहि। ओजः असि ओजो मयि धेहि।
मन्युः असि मन्युं मयि धेहि। सहः असि सहो मयि धेहि।। यजुर्वेद XIX.9

8. मयि त्यदिन्द्रियं बृहन्मयि दक्षो मयि क्रतुः।
घर्मस्त्रिशुग्वि राजति विराजा ज्योतिषा सह ब्रह्मणा तेजसा सह।।
यजुर्वेद XXXVIII.27

9. स्वयंभूरसि श्रेष्ठो रश्मिर्वर्चोदा असि वर्चो मे देहि।
सूर्यस्यावृतमन्वावर्ते।। यजुर्वेद II.26

10. भग एव भगवान् अस्तु देवास्तेन वयं भगवंतः स्याम।
तं त्वा भग सर्व इज्जोहवीति स नो भग पुरएता भवेह।। ऋग्वेद VII.41.5

11. समुद्रादूर्मिर्मधुमाँ उदारदुपांशुना सममृतत्वमानट्।
घृतस्य नाम गुह्यं यदस्ति जिह्वा देवानाममृतस्य नाभिः।।

वयं नाम प्र ब्रवामा घृतस्यास्मिन् यज्ञे धारयामा नमोभिः।
उप ब्रह्मा शृणवच्छस्यमानं चतुः शृंगोऽवमीद् गौर एतत्।। ऋग्वेद IV.58.1,2

12. कस्य नूनं कतमस्य अमृतानां मनामहे चारु देवस्य नाम।
को नो मह्या अदितये पुनर्दात् पितरं च दृशेयं मातरं च।।
अग्नेः वयं प्रथमस्य अमृतानां मनामहे चारु देवस्य नाम।
स नो मह्या अदितये पुनर्दात् पितरं च दृशेयं मातरं च।। ऋग्वेद I.24.1, 2

13. तमु स्तोतारः पूर्व्यं यथा विद ऋतस्य गर्भं जनुषा पिपर्तन।
आस्य जानंतो नाम चिद्विवक्तन महस्ते विष्णो सुमतिं भजामहे।। ऋग्वेद I.156.3

14. स्थिरं मनश्चकृषे जात इंद्र वेषीदेको युधये भूयसः चित्।
अश्मानं चित् शवसा दिद्युतो वि विदो गवामूर्वं उस्त्रियाणाम्।। ऋग्वेद V.30.4

15. सप्त ऋषयः प्रतिहिताः शरीरे सप्त रक्षंति सदं अप्रमादम्।
सप्तापः स्वपतो लोकमीयुः तत्र जागृतो अस्वप्नजौ सत्रसदौ च देवौ।।
यजुर्वेद XXXIV.55

16. यत्ते यमं वैवस्वतं मनो जगाम दूरकम्। तत्त आ वर्तयामसि इह क्षयाय जीवसे॥
यत्ते दिवं... पृथिवीम्... चतस्रः प्रदिशो... समुद्रमर्णवं... अपो...
ओषधीः... सूर्यं... उषसं... पर्वतान्... विश्वमिदं... भूतं च भव्यं च
मनो जगाम दूरकम्। तत्त आ वर्तयामसीह क्षयाय जीवसे।। ऋग्वेद X.58.1-12

17. अग्निं धीभिर्मनीषिणो मेधिरासो विपश्चितः।
अद्मसद्याय हिन्विरे।। ऋग्वेद VIII.43.19

18. युंजानः प्रथमं मनस्तत्त्वाय सविता धियः।
अग्नेः ज्योतिः निचाय्य पृथिव्याः अध्याभरत्।। यजुर्वेद XI.1

19. बृहता मन उप ह्वये मातरिश्वना प्राणापानौ।
सूर्याच्चक्षुरन्तरिक्षाच्छ्रोत्रं पृथिव्याः शरीरम्।
सरस्वत्या वाचमुप ह्वयामहे मनोयुजा।। अथर्ववेद V.10.8

20. क्व त्री चक्रा त्रिवृतो रथस्य क्व त्रयो वंधुरो ये सनीळाः।
कदा योगो वाजिनो रासभस्य येन यज्ञं नासत्योपयाथः।। ऋग्वेद I.34.9

21. सप्त प्राणान् अष्टौ मन्यस्तांस्ते वृश्चामि ब्रह्मणा।
अया यमस्य सादनम् अग्निदूतो अरंकृतः।।
आ दधामि ते पदं समिद्धे जातवेदसि।
अग्निः शरीरं वेवेष्टु असुं वागपि गच्छतु।। अथर्ववेद II.12.7,8

22. सप्त ते अग्ने समिधः सप्तजिह्वाः सप्त ऋषयः सप्त धाम प्रियाणि।
सप्त होत्राः सप्तधा त्वा यजंति सप्त योनीः आपृणस्व घृतेन, स्वाहा।।
यजुर्वेद XVII.79

23. चक्षुश्च श्रोत्रं च मनश्च वाक् च प्राणापानौ देह इदं शरीरम्।
द्वौ प्रत्यञ्चावनुलोमौ विसर्गावेतं तं मन्ये दशयंत्रमुत्सम्।। ऋग्वेद (खिलसूक्त) XII.1

24. मूर्धानमस्य संसीव्य अथर्वा हृदयं च यत्।
मस्तिष्कादूर्ध्वः प्रैरयत् पवमानोऽधिशीर्षतः।।
तद्वाथर्वणः शिरो देवकोशः समुब्जितः।
तत् प्राणोऽभि रक्षति शिरो अन्नमथो मनः।।
ऊर्ध्वो नु सृष्टा स्तिर्यङ् नु सृष्टाः सर्वा दिशः पुरुष आ बभूवाँ।
पुरं यो ब्रह्मणो वेद यस्याः पुरुष उच्यते।। अथर्ववेद X.2.26-28

25. कश्यपस्य स्वर्विदो यावाहुः सयुजाविति।
ययोर्विश्वमपि व्रतं यज्ञं धीरा निचाय्य।। सामवेद 361

26. त्वामग्ने पुष्करादध्यथर्वा निरमन्थत। मूर्ध्नो विश्वस्य वाघतः।। ऋग्वेद VI.16.13

27. युंजंति बध्नमरुषं चरंतं परि तस्थुषः। रोचंते रोचना दिवि।।
युंजंति अस्य काम्या हरी विपक्षसा रथे। शोणा धृष्णू नृवाहसा।। ऋग्वेद I.6.1, 2

28. यस्मात् ऋते न सिध्यति यज्ञो विपश्चितश्चन।
स धीनां योग सिन्वति।। ऋग्वेद I.18.7

29. युक्त्वाय सविता देवान् त्स्वर्यतो धिया दिवम्।
बृहज्ज्योतिः करिष्यतः सविता प्र सुवाति तान्।। यजुर्वेद XI.3

30. रोहितो यज्ञस्य जनिता मुखं च रोहिताय वाचा श्रोत्रेण मनसा जुहोमि।
रोहितं देवा यन्ति सुमनस्यमाना स मा रोहैः सामित्यै रोहयतु।। अथर्ववेद XIII.1.13

31. आमोगयं प्र यदिच्छंत ऐवना पाकाः प्रांचो मम के चिदापयः।
सौधन्वनासश्चरितस्य भूमनागच्छत सवितुर्दाशुषो गृहम्।।
तत्सविता वोऽमृतत्वमासुवदगोह्यं यच्छ्वयंत ऐतन।
त्यं चित् चमसमसुरस्य भक्षणमेकं संतं अकृणुता चतुर्वयम्।। ऋग्वेद I.110.2-3

32. स घा नः योग आ भुवत् स राये स पुरंध्याम्। गमद्वाजेभिरा स नः।।
ऋग्वेद I.5.3

33. य एक इद्धव्यश्चर्षणीनामिन्द्रं तं गीर्भिरभ्यर्च आभिः।
यः पत्यते वृषभो वृण्यावान् त्सत्यः सत्वा पुरुमायः सहस्वान्।। ऋग्वेद VI.22.1

34. इंद्रमिद् विमहीनां मेधे वृणीत मर्त्यः। इंद्रं सनिष्युरूतये।। ऋग्वेद VIII.6.44

35. नहि नु ते महिमनः समस्य न मघवन् मघवत्त्वस्य विद्म।
न राधसो राधसो नूतनस्येंद्र नकिर्ददृश इंद्रियं ते।। ऋग्वेद VI.27.3

36. न ते अंतः शवसो धाय्यस्य वि तु बाबधे रोदसी महित्वा।
आ ता सूरिः पृणति तूतुजानो यूथेवाप्सु समीजमान ऊती।। ऋग्वेद VI.29.5

37. न त्वावाँ अन्यो दिव्यो न पार्थिवो न जातो न जनिष्यते।
अश्वायन्तो मघवन्निन्द्र वाजिनो गव्यन्तस्त्वा हवामहे।। ऋग्वेद VII.32.23

38. अर्हन् बिभर्षि सायकानि धन्वार्हन् निष्कं यजतं विश्वरूपम्।
अर्हन्निदं दयसे विश्वमभ्वं न वा ओजीयो रुद्र त्वदस्ति।। ऋग्वेद II.33.10

39. वि हि अरव्यं मनसा वस्य इच्छन्निंद्राग्नी ज्ञासः उत वा सजातान्।
नान्या युवत् प्रमतिरस्ति मह्यं स वां धियं वाजयंतीं अतक्षम्।। ऋग्वेद I.109.1

40. पांतमा वो अंधसः इंद्रमभि प्र गायत। विश्वासाहं शतक्रतुं मंहिष्ठं चर्षणीनाम्।।
पुरुहूतं पुरुष्टुतं गाथान्यं सनश्रुतम्। इन्द्र इति ब्रवीतन।। ऋग्वेद VIII.92.1, 2

41. ईळे च त्वा यजमानो हविर्भिरीळे सखित्वं सुमतिं निकामः।
देवैरवो मिमीहि सं जरित्रे रक्षा च नो दम्येभिरनीकैः।। ऋग्वेद III.1.15

42. या ते धामानि परमाणि यावमा या मध्यमा विश्वकर्मन्नुतेमा।
शिक्षा सखिभ्यो हविषि स्वधावः स्वयं यजस्व तन्वं वृधानः।। ऋग्वेद X.81.5

43. विश्वकर्मा सर्वस्य कर्त्ता। तस्य एषा भवति। विश्वकर्मा विमना
आद्विहाया। तत्र इतिहासमाचक्षते।
विश्वकर्मा भौवनः सर्वमेधे सर्वाणि भूतानि जुहुवांचकार।
स आत्मानमपि अंततो जुहुवांचकार। तदभिवादिन्येषगृर्भवति।
य इमा विश्वा भुवनानि जुह्वत्।। निरुक्त X.26

44. य इमा विश्वा भुवनानि जुह्वत् ऋषिर्होता न्यसीदत् पिता नः।
स आशिषा द्रविणमिच्छमानः प्रथमच्छद् अवरान् आ विवेश।। ऋग्वेद X.81.1

45. आशुरर्ष बृहन्मते परि प्रियेण धाम्ना। यत्र देवाः इति ब्रवन्।। ऋग्वेद IX.39.1

46. विप्रं विप्रासोऽवसे देवं मर्तास ऊतये। अग्निं गीर्भिर्हवामहे।।
आ ते वत्सो मनो यमत् परमात् चित् सधस्थात्। अग्ने त्वांकामया गिरा।।
ऋग्वेद VIII.11.6,7

47. एवा तमाहुरुत शृण्व इन्द्र एको विभक्ता तरणिर्मघानाम्।
मिथस्तुर ऊतयो यस्यपूर्वीरस्मे भद्राणि सश्चत प्रियाणि।। ऋग्वेद VII.26.4

48. इंद्रस्य बाहू स्थविरौ युवानावनाधृष्यौ सुप्रतीकावसह्यौ।
तौ युंजीत प्रथमौ योग आगते याभ्यां जितमसुराणां सहो महत्।। सामवेद 1869

49. यो यजाति यजात इत् सुनवत् च पचाति च। ब्रह्मेत् इंद्रस्य चाकनत्।।
ऋग्वेद VIII.31.1

50. वचोविदं वाचमुदीरयन्तीं विश्वाभिर्धीभिरुपतिष्ठमानाम्।
देवीं देवेभ्यः पर्येयुषीं गामा मावृक्त मर्त्यो दभ्रचेताः।। ऋग्वेद VIII.101.16

51. वयं ते त इंद्र ये च देव स्तवंत शूर ददतो मघानि।
यच्छा सूरिभ्य उपमं वरूथं स्वाभुवो जरणामश्नवंत।। ऋग्वेद VII.30.4

52. पराकात्ताच्चिदद्रिवस्त्वां नक्षन्त नो गिरः। अरं गमाम ते वयम्।। ऋग्वेद VIII.92.27

53 मघोनः स्म वृत्रहत्येषु चोदय ये ददति प्रिया वसु।
तव प्रणीती हर्यश्व सूरिभिर्विश्वा तरेम दुरिता।। ऋग्वेद VII.32.15

54. यो अस्मान् चक्षुषा मनसा चित्त्या आकूत्या च यो अघायुः अभिदासात्।
त्वं तान् अग्ने मेन्यामेनीन् कृणु स्वाहा।।
इंद्रस्य गृहोसि।... इंद्रस्य शर्मासि।... इंद्रस्य वर्मासि।...
इंद्रस्य वरूथमसि। तं त्वा प्र पद्ये तं त्वा प्र विशामि सर्वगुः
सर्वपूरुषः सर्वात्मा सर्वतनूः सह यन्मे अस्ति तेन।। अथर्ववेद V.6.10-14

55. अस्मा इत् उ प्रय इव प्र यंसि भरामि आंगूषं बाधे सुवृक्ति।
इंद्राय हृदा मनसा मनीषा प्रत्नाय पत्ये धियो मर्जयंत।। ऋग्वेद I.61.2

56. एतं भागं परि ददामि विद्वान् विश्वकर्मन् प्रथमजा ऋतस्य।
अस्माभिर्दत्तं जरसः परस्तात् अच्छिन्नं तंतुमनु सं तरेम।। अथर्ववेद VI.122.1

57. नहि मे अस्त्यघ्न्या न स्वधितिर्वनन्वति।
अथैतादृग्भरामि ते।। ऋग्वेद VIII.102.19

58. हृदा पूतं मनसा जातवेदो विश्वानि देव वयुनानि विद्वान्।
सप्तास्यानि तव जातवेदस्तेभ्यो जुहोमि स जुषस्व हव्यम्।। अथर्ववेद IV.39.10

59. त्वयेद्रिंद्र युजा वयं प्रति ब्रुवीमहि स्पृधः। त्वमस्माकं तव स्मसि।। ऋग्वेद VIII.92.32

60. आ यद्वाम् ईयचक्षसा मित्र वयं च सूरयः।
व्यचिष्ठे बहुपाय्ये यतेमहि स्वराज्ये।। ऋग्वेद V.66.6

61. तं पृच्छन्तोऽवरासः पराणि प्रत्ना त इन्द्र श्रुत्यानु येमुः।
अर्चामसि वीर ब्रह्मवाहो यादेव विद्म तात् त्वा महान्तम्।। ऋग्वेद VI.21.6

62. सुश्रुतौ कर्णौ भद्रश्रुतौ कर्णौ भद्रं श्लोकं श्रूयासम्।
सुश्रुतिश्च मोपश्रुतिश्च मा हासिष्टाम् सौपर्णं चक्षुरजस्रं ज्योतिः।। अथर्ववेद XVI.2.4,5

63. वृषणं धीभिरप्तुरं सोममृतस्य धारया। मती विप्राः समस्वरन्।। ऋग्वेद IX.63.21

64. यः पूर्व्याय वेधसे नवीयसे सुमज्जानये विष्णवे ददाशति।
यो जातमस्य महतो महि ब्रवत् सेदु श्रवोभिर्युज्यं चिदभ्यसत्।। ऋग्वेद I.156.2

65. विष्णोर्नु कं वीर्याणि प्र वोचं यः पार्थिवानि विममे रजांसि।
यो अस्कभायत् उत्तरं सधस्थम् विचक्रमाणस्त्रेधोरुगायः।। ऋग्वेद I.154.1

66. इमा उ त्वा पुरूवसो गिरो वर्धन्तु या मम।
पावकवर्णाः शुचयो विपश्चितोऽभि स्तोमैरनूषत।। ऋग्वेद VIII.3.3

67. वि यद् वाचं कीस्तासो भरन्ते शंसन्ति के चिन्निविदो मनानाः।
आद् वां ब्रवाम सत्यान्युक्था नकिर्देवेभिर्यतथो महित्वा।। ऋग्वेद VI.67.10

68. महीरस्य प्रणीतयः पूर्वीरुत प्रशस्तयः। नास्य क्षीयन्त ऊतयः।।
सखायो ब्रह्मवाहसेऽर्चत प्र च गायत। स हि नः प्रमतिर्महीं।।
ऋग्वेद VI.45.3-4

69. उप त्वा रण्वसंदृशं प्रयस्वन्तः सहस्कृत। अग्ने ससृज्महे गिरः।।। ऋग्वेद VI.16.37

70. त्वामग्ने मनीषिणस्त्वां हिन्वन्ति चित्तिभिः। त्वां वर्धन्तु नो गिरः।। ऋग्वेद VIII.44.19

71. मर्ता अमर्त्यस्य ते भूरि नाम मनामहे। विप्रासो जातवेदसः।। ऋग्वेद VIII.11.5

72. पदं देवस्य नमसा व्यंतः श्रवस्यवः श्रव आपन्नमृक्तम्।
नामानि चित् दधिरे यज्ञियानि भद्रायां ते रणयंत संदृष्टौ।। ऋग्वेद VI.1.4

73. श्रिये ते पादा दुव आ मिमिक्षुर्धृष्णुर्वज्री शवसा दक्षिणावान्।
वसानो अत्कं सुरभिं दृशे कं स्वर्ण नृतविषिरो बभूथ।। ऋग्वेद VI.29.3

74. अभित्यं देवं सवितारमोण्योः कविक्रतुम्।
अर्चामि सत्यसवं रत्नधामभि प्रियं मतिम्।। अथर्ववेद VII.14.1

75. अर्चत प्रार्चत प्रियमेधासो अर्चत।
अर्चतु पुत्रका उत पुरं न धृष्ण्वर्चत।। ऋग्वेद VIII.69.8

76. यजाम इन्नमसा वृद्धमिंद्रम् वृहंतं ऋष्वं अजरं युवानम्।
यस्य प्रिये ममतुर्यज्ञियस्य न रोदसी महिमानं ममाते।। ऋग्वेद III.32.7

77. नम इदुग्रं नम आ विवासे नमो दाधार पृथिवी मुन द्याम्।
नमो देवेभ्यो नम ईश एषां कृतं चिदेनो नमसा विवासे।। ऋग्वेद VI.51.8

78. नमो महद्भ्यो नमो अर्भकेभ्यो नमो युवभ्यो नम आशिनेभ्यः।
यजाम देवान् यदि शक्नवाम मा ज्यायसः शंस मा वृक्षि देवाः।। ऋग्वेद I.27.13

79. नमः शङ्गवे च पशुपतये च नम उग्राय च भीमाय च नमोऽग्रे।
वधाय च दूरे वधाय च नमो हन्त्रे च हनीयसे च।
नमो वृक्षेभ्यो हरिकेशोभ्यो नमस्ताराय।। यजुर्वेद XVI.40

80. नमो गणेभ्यो गणपतिभ्यश्च वो नमो नमो व्रातेभ्यो
व्रातपतिभ्यश्च वो नमो। नमो गृत्सेभ्यो गृत्सपतिभ्यश्चं
वो नमो नमो विरूपेभ्यो विश्वरूपेभ्यश्च वो नमः।। यजुर्वेद XVI.25

81. नमः पार्याय चावार्याय च नमः प्रतरणाय चोत्तरणाय च।
नमस्तीर्थ्याय च कूल्याय च नमः शष्पयाय च फेन्याय च।। यजुर्वेद XVI.42

82. नमस्ते अस्तु पश्यत पश्य मा पश्यत।। अथर्ववेद XIII.4.55

83. उप त्वाग्ने दिवे दिवे दोषावस्तर्धिया वयम्। नमो भरंत एमसि।। ऋग्वेद I.1.7

84. पुरु त्वा दाश्वान् वोचेऽरिरग्ने तव स्विदा। तो दस्येव शरण आ महस्य।। ऋग्वेद I.150.1

85. अरं दासो न मीळ्हुषे कराण्यहं देवाय भूर्णयेऽनागाः।
अचेतयदचितो देवो अर्यो गृत्सं राये कवितरो जुनाति।। ऋग्वेद VII.86.7

86. मह उग्राय तवसे सुवृक्तिं प्रेरय शिवतमाय पथ्यः।
गिर्वाहसे गिर इन्द्राय पूर्वीर्धेहि तन्वे कुविदङ्ग वेदत्।। ऋग्वेद VIII.96.10

87. त्वामच्छा चरामसि तदिदर्थं दिवे दिवे। इन्द्रो त्वे न आशसः।। ऋग्वेद IX.1.5

88. तं त्वा गीर्भिः गिर्वणसं द्रविणस्युं द्रविणोदः। सपर्येम सपर्यवः।। ऋग्वेद II.6.3

89. स नो हरीणां पत इन्दो देवप्सरस्तमः।
सखेव सख्ये नर्यो रुचे भव।। ऋग्वेद IX.105.5

90. वयमिंद्र त्वायवः सखित्वमा रभामहे।
ऋतस्य नः पथा नयाऽति विश्वानि दुरिता,
नभंतामन्यकेषां ज्याका अधि धन्वसु।। ऋग्वेद X.133.6

91. शं नो भव हृद आ पीत इंदो पितेव सोम सूनवे सुशेवः।
सखेव सख्य उरुशंस धीरः प्र ण आयुर्जीवसे सोम तारीः।। ऋग्वेद VIII.48.4

92. त्वं सोम सूर एषस्तोकस्य साता तनूनाम्। वृणीमहे सख्याय वृणीमहे युज्याय।।
ऋग्वेद IX.66.18

93. अहं च त्वं च वृत्रहन्त्सं युज्याव सनिभ्य आ।
अरातीवा चिदद्रिवोऽनु नौ शूर मंसते भद्रा इन्द्रस्य रातयः।। ऋग्वेद VIII.62.11

94. आ नो भद्राः क्रतवो यंतु विश्वतोऽदब्धासो अपरीतास उद्भिदः।
देवा नो यथा सदमिद् वृधे असन्नप्रायुवो रक्षितारो दिवे दिवे।।
देवानां भद्रा सुमतिः ऋजूयतां देवानां रातिरभि नो नि वर्तताम्।
देवानां सख्यमुप सेदिमा वयं, देवा न आयुः प्र तिरंतु जीवसे।। ऋग्वेद I.89.1, 2

95. उरुष्या णो अभिशस्तेः सोम नि पाह्यंहसः। सखा सुशेव एधि नः।।
आ प्यायस्व समेतु ते विश्वतः सोम वृष्ण्यम्। भवा वाजस्य संगथे।।
आ प्यायस्व मदिन्तम सोम विश्वेभिरंशुभिः। भवा नः सुश्रवस्तमः सखा वृधे।।
ऋग्वेद I.91.15-17

96. न घा त्वद्रिगप वेति मे मनस्त्वे इत् कामं पुरुहूत शिश्रय।।
राजेव दस्म नि षदः अधि बर्हिषि अस्मिन् त्सु सोमे अवपानमस्तु ते।।
ऋग्वेद X.43.2

97. गृहमेधास आ गत मरुतो माप भूतन। युष्माकोती सुदानवः।
इह इह वः स्वतवसः कवयः सूर्यत्वचः। यज्ञं मरुत आ वृणे।। ऋग्वेद VII.59.10-11

98. शुची वो हव्या मरुतः शुचीनां शुचि हिनोम्यध्वरं शुचिभ्यः।
ऋतेन सत्यमृतसाप आयन् शुचिजन्मानः शुचयः पावकाः।। ऋग्वेद VII.56.12

99. पवित्रवन्तः परि वाचमासते पितैषां प्रत्नो अभि रक्षति व्रतम्।
महः समुद्रं वरुणस्तिरो दधे धीरा इच्छेकुर्धरुणेष्वारभम्।। ऋग्वेद IX.73.3

100. ये मूर्धानः क्षितीनामदब्धासः स्वयशसः। व्रता रक्षन्ते अद्रुहः।। ऋग्वेद VIII.67.13

101. पृषत् अश्वा मरुतः पृश्निमातरः शुभंयावानो विदथेषु जग्मयः।
अग्निजिह्वा मनवः सूरचक्षसो विश्वे नो देवा अवसा गमन्निह।। ऋग्वेद I.89.7

102. प्र वो यज्ञेषु देवयन्तो अर्चन् द्यावा नमोभिः पृथिवी इषध्यै।
येषां ब्रह्माण्यसमानि विप्रा विष्वग्वियन्ति वनिनो न शाखाः।। ऋग्वेद VII.43.1

103. वाजेवाजेऽवत वाजिनो नो धनेषु विप्रा अमृता ऋतज्ञाः।
अस्य मध्वः पिबत मादयध्वं तृप्ता यात पथिभिर्देवयानैः।। ऋग्वेद VII.38.8

104. यः सोम सख्ये तव शरणत् देव मर्त्यः। तं दक्षः सचते कविः।। ऋग्वेद I.91.14

105. मा वो घ्नंतं मा शपंतं प्रति वोचे देवयंतम्। सुम्नैरित् व आ विवासे।।
चतुरश्चित् ददमानात् बिभीयादा निधातोः। न दुरुक्ताय स्पृहयेत्।। ऋग्वेद I.41.8, 9

106. क्षेति क्षेमेभिः साधुभिर्नकिर्यं घ्नन्ति हन्तियः। अग्ने सुवीर एधते।। ऋग्वेद VIII.84.9

107. प्र यदेते प्रतरं पूर्व्यं गुः सदःसद आतिष्ठन्तो अजुर्यम्।
कविः शुषस्य मातरा रिहाणे जाम्यै धुर्यं पतिमेरयेथाम्।। अथर्ववेद V.1.4

CHAPTER VIII

The Dark Night of the Soul

1. A Period of No-Progress. It is a characteristic of spiritual progress, as of psychological progress, that it does not proceed along a straight line. If we draw a graph of progress, the curve "shows a negative acceleration, it flattens out as practice advances; the rate of improvement decreases."[1] There appears a lull without any kind of improvement. Activity is arrested, as it happens when a cart-wheel is stuck up in a pot-hole and does not come out. All past effort seems to have gone down a bottom-less vessel. Intense spiritual practice does not yield any fruit so much so that a devotee begins to question its very efficacy. As no indication of progress is within sight, and as a bulk of his strenuous work appears to have gone waste, he is plunged into a state of disappointment. The length of the period and the intensity of despair differ from person to person. But by no means, this intervening period of no-progress, can be called inactivity. The surface of the sea looks to be calm though there is a great turmoil within. There is hectic activity inside the mind; things collected are being soaked in and absorbed. There is a re-arranging of lines before a quick march is ordered. The only thing is that all this goes on silently without sending out any news bulletins, and giving an impression that the period is fruitless. If in psychology, this period of no apparent progress is called the plateau period, in the psychology of religion, it is named the Dark Night of the Soul. This interval of apparent quietude forms the link between the two phases of sharp profits — one which precedes it and the other which succeeds it. The link itself contributes a great deal to the progress without being taken any notice of. Only in terms of concrete gains, can it be called a negative stage; but like all periods of incubation, it is a period of consolidation and growth. In fact, psychologists have characterised this silent period as one "during

1 R.S. Woodworth, Experimental Psychology, Methuen and Co. Ltd., London, 1951, P.164

which the lower-order habits were being perfected but were not sufficiently automatic to permit the development of the higher habits."[1] In spiritual life the plateau may occur right at the start, and consequently it may appear that there has been no genuine beginning at all. It is perhaps a period of internal fighting with a number of impediments on the path. "I am always warring with the world and with the mind", says Tukārāma. Fighting with the mind is fighting with passions which pose no less a problem. The Yoga-sūtras have enumerated such obstructions: व्याधि-स्त्यान-संशय-प्रमाद-आलस्य-अविरति-भ्रान्तिदर्शन-अलब्धभूमिकत्व-अनवस्थितत्वानि चित्तविक्षेपाः ते अन्तराया : । (I. 30). (Disease, mental laziness, doubt, lack of enthusiasm, lethargy, clinging to sense-enjoyments, false perception, non-attainment of concentration and falling away from the state when obtained, are the obstructing distractions). How do they block the way of progress? Swami Vivekananda's beautiful commentary on this Sūtra is : "This body is the boat which will carry us to the other shore of the ocean of life. It must be taken care of. Unhealthy persons cannot be Yogis. Mental laziness makes us lose all lively interest in the subject, without which there will neither be the will nor the energy to practise. Doubts will arise in the mind about the truth of the science, however strong one's intellectual conviction may be, until certain peculiar psychic experiences come, as hearing or seeing at a distance etc. These glimpses strengthen the mind and make the student persevere... Some days or weeks when you are practising, the mind will be calm and easily concentrated, and you will find yourself progressing fast. All of a sudden the progress will stop one day, and you will find yourself, as it were, stranded. Persevere. All progress proceeds by such rise and fall."[2]

Whatever may be the explanation of this period of plateau, the point to be noted is, that in the wake of the disappointment caused by the absence of progress, man begins to devalue himself. Books on Psychology of Religion are full of accounts of this negative state

1 Ibid P. 166

2 Raja Yoga, Advaita Ashram, 5 Dehi Entally Road, Calcutta - 14, 1973, Pp. 146-147

of an aspirant's mind. It may lead to utter condemnation of oneself. This dimunition of self, according to Rudolph Otto, is of two different origins. One is the creature-feeling in the presence of the *mysterium tremendum*, i.e. the realisation of our own little-ness compared to the divine prowess. The other is the depreciation, disvaluation or the feeling of profaneness as diametrically opposed to the holiness of the *numen*.[1] While the former is psycho-metaphysical as the feeling originates from the infinitude of the *numen*, the latter is psycho-axiological as it is caused by the holiness of the *numen*.

2. Optimism of the Vedic Seer. It is remarkable that neither of these two feelings of littleness, is found to be dominant in Vedic literature. In the first place, the feeling of awe before the Sublime, stressed by Kant and Otto, and the consequent melting of individuality, are rarely found here. The mysticism of the Vedas, treated gods more as friends than as terror-striking powers. Secondly, though the Vedic thinkers have expressed anxiety as regards their unhappy conditions, and though they have clearly admitted their transgressions of the moral laws, they have not expressed any feeling of profaneness. The 'breezy and easy tempered' Vedic thinkers would outright dismiss this uncompromising judgement of self-depreciation passed by those who take themselves to be sinful creatures before the Holy. The most that they would do, is to express remorse for an individual wrong action, and ask for forgiveness. There is no exaggerated abasement of oneself. No vast-scale self-condemning feelings are found seething in their bosoms. Another factor to be noted is that their outbursts do not testify to any acutely piercing or long-lasting despair. They always see an optimistic picture ahead. Instead of pondering or grieving over the sins, they would try to remove the blot by invoking God's grace. Theirs was a religion of healthy-mindedness. Healthy-minded temperament, according to William James, is "the temperament which has a constitutional incapacity for prolonged suffering, and in which the tendency to see things optimistically is

1 See, The Idea of the Holy, Pp. 52 ff

like a water of crystallisation in which the individual's character is set."[1] The Vedic sages do not seem to belong to the type of the sick soul which is continually vexed with the diabolical thoughts of the weakness of the flesh. One should not lie weeping and brooding over one's sins. "Evil is a disease; and worry over disease is itself an additional form of disease, which only adds to the original complaint."[2] We should be up and doing and take the course of righteousness again, "...for he that rises again quickly and continues his race is as if he had never fallen."[3] Thus with the Vedic Ṛṣis, the Dark Night of the soul is, after all, not that pitchy dark; it is a play of light and shadow and not an unending spell of hopelessness. We shall see in this chapter how there are times when God is nowhere to be seen; neither does he pay attention to the prayers of the devotees. The aspirant begins to search Him. God is requested to forgive the devotee's sins and visit him. The Ṛṣis have recorded their yearning for light and need of protection. Sometimes a quarrel is picked up but it ends in the devotee's appeal for mercy.

3. A Search for God in the Universe. A number of hymns indicate an uneasy state of mind in search of God and prayer to God to run to the devotee. Ṛṣi Aindra Vasukra prays: "What sort of cheering Soma will please you most, Oh Indra? Oh lustrous one, listen to my prayer and speed up to my sacrificial hall. When will the chariot bearing you appear before me and fulfil my desires? When may I be able to worship you with my offerings of food and wealth?" (S.1).

A query is made to find out the whereabouts of the Aświns. "Aświns of lordly demeanour, sovereigns over auspicious bliss, where are you now? In whose delightful company have you been held up? Who has detained you today? Who is that sage to whose house you have gone?" (S.2). There is no end to this search, and a number of similar hymns are strewn over the Vedas. "Where is Indra of

1 The Varieties of Religions Experience, The new American Library of World Literature, 501 Madison Avenue, New York 22, P. 112

2 Ibid, P. 112

3 Ibid, P. 114

godly deeds? Where and with which devotee is he staying? Oh, Indra, which kind of sacrifice will be acceptable to you? Which Arka hymn? Which sacrificer?" (S.3). Or, "Where is Indra, lord among men, who is of great youthfulness and prowess, who holds his head high and radiates bravery? Who is serving him with praises? To whose house does the valiant God retire for partaking Soma? Who is he that is devoted to Indra? Oh slayer of Vṛtra, who is the beneficiary of your blessings? Who profited from your valour? Who is completely absorbed in singing your praises? In my house, a mere mortal though I am, Soma is kept ready to be served. Hasten to my place and receive it" (S.4). "Who are those that are singing songs for you and are eager to walk on the path of rectitude? Which is that deity, Ṛṣi or the learned devotee, who is meditating on you? Oh Indra, your devotee is singing your greatness and is presenting Soma to you. When will you respond to his ardent call, Oh, when?" (S.5). A popular verse has clearly spelt out:

नाहं वसामि वैकुण्ठे योगिनां हृदये रवौ।
मद्भक्ता यत्र गायन्ति तत्र तिष्ठामि नारद॥

(I do not reside in the Vaikuṇṭha, nor in the hearts of Yogins, nor in the orbit of the sun. I am invariably present where my devotees sing my praises). Foreshadowing this, the Vedic Ṛṣi asks: "To whose laudations are these Maruts listening? Who can that devotee possibly be, who has taken them to his sacrificial hall? Which is that highest type of devotion that will help us in pleasing these Maruts who fly past the sky like a hawk?" (S.6). "What are the oblations by which the revered and ever prospering Indra will befriend us? (S.7). In another poem, Agni is approached with a similar prayer. Ṛṣi Vāmadeva Gautama asks : "You are the presiding deity of this sacrifice of ours, Oh Agni, please listen to our prayers. When will those prayers be pleasing to you? When will you be bound to us by a tie of friendship?" (S.8). "How can the omniscient Varuṇa, bedecked by valour, be propitiated?" (S.9). Such psalms show a bewildered state of mind. The sages have the resources ready. They have all the material of the sacrifice. They have Soma. They have their minds or even themselves to offer. But they do not know how, when and to whom to offer these things. They are also afraid that

there are rivals who would outsmart them and earn gods' favours. Such a state of indecision is always disagreeable. The goal is clear but the way seems to be unlit. In fact it is not known whether there is only one way or there are many. There is just groping in the dark. Looking back, an aspirant remembers the hours of battles through which he has passed with confidence and courage. Then why this state of suspence and tension? Was his progress hitherto only spurious? Was his satisfaction illusory? Was his rejoicing premature? His doubts are greeted with silence. But the sage is not choleric by temperament, he keeps his calm and hopes for the best. His condition of torment is short-lived. His mind is not sealed against the bright side of things. He promises himself that fortune will change the scene and that lights will be switched on. As he can not find a way out all by himself, he takes a vigorous resolve and calls on God Himself to dart to him.

Here are some of the entreaties. "May you be far or near, or anywhere in the empyrean, Oh Indra, slayer of Vṛtra run to our succour. Please partake of our gift of Soma and protect us" (S.10). "Indra, our leaders are invoking your presence from wherever you may be — whether in the eastern, western, southern or northern regions. Yoke your speedy horses and be with us. You may be in the midst of celebration in the heavens or in the region of divine light or enjoying Soma; but even then, hasten to us" (S.11). God may not be moved by a single prayer and so the aspirant keeps waiting for Him. He is sure that the Lord will pay heed to his prayers and has kept his libations ready. "When I had an ardent desire for seeing you, I said that our own worshippers must offer this Soma to you. Do have a regard for my true devotion and come to us to receive our sacrifice of Soma. Oh Indra and Agni, you may be in your palaces, in the house of your devotees, or in some sacrificial hall; leave that place and come to us to drink our gift of Soma. You may be in the abodes of Yadu, Turvaśa, Druhya, Anu or Pūru; come to partake of our gift of Soma. You may be in heaven, earth, plants or in waters, come to accept our tribute in the form of Soma. Even though you may be enjoying oblations in heaven at the time of sun-rise, come and be pleased with our present of Soma" (S.12). The aspirant is

not tired of praying again and again to God and asking Him to befriend him; he is also not afraid of pointing out that God should not stand on formalities and wait for an invitation. After all does He not appreciate the deep reverence that the devotee is cherishing for Him? "How is it Oh Aświns, that we are required to extend our invitation to you repeatedly as to an old man? Be you propitious to us" (S.13)

4. A Request for Forgiveness. God is invoked to forgive man's foibles and not merely condone them. Sins are confessed before God so that He should forgive inspite of their magnitude. Forgiveness should come solely out of His infinite love for His children. If He would just condone our sins or be indifferent to our misbehaviour, thinking that, after all, nothing better was expected of us, it would be under-valuing our worth. It would consign us to the level of an animal which does not know what is moral and what is immoral. It would amount to dehumanisation of man. Forgiveness lies in recognising the enormity of the mistake and still witholding punishment, sheerly out of love. The aspirants, therefore, fully own their guilt and pray for forgiveness. They are sure that guilty though they are, they will be forgiven by the loving God. Viciousness should be sought out and its seriousness should be realised but at the same time it should be graciously pardoned. He who owns that he has not taken the right path, prays for being led along the proper one. "Oh Agni, help us cross the dangers. We, your children, offer tributes to you who are like a father unto us. When would you turn your gracious eye towards us? You are the controller of the cosmic laws; when would you take us towards the just avenue?" (S.14). We have another prayer addressed to Agni to burn all the previous failings. "Oh ever youthful Agni, we have failed in our devotion but we have committed this sin out of sheer ignorance. Be compassionate and free us from the stain through Aditi. Snap all the chains of our pitfalls which are indeed fetters. Though we might have sinned against men or gods even to a great extent, we, who are your friends, should never suffer. Bestow happiness on our progeny" (S.15).

This reminds us of the Socratic maxim that virtue is knowledge. Man commits a wrong because he does not know what

is right, says Socrates. That sage of Athens fondly entertained the idea that intellectual understanding that an act is wrong, prevents a person from doing it. Alas, it is not always so. Man knows that he is doing wrong and still persists in repeating it. Aristotle who was more of a practical constitution expected man not only to know what is right but also to feel emotional attachment to it. For Aristotle, moral goodness is the product of two factors, one intellectual and the other emotional. The two cooperate in producing moral goodness and each factor influences the development of the other. Intellectual ability becomes intellectual virtue as a result of development. Emotional disposition (natural virtue or goodness of nature) becomes moral virtue as a result of development. Complete moral goodness is the perfect development of an emotional and an intellectual factor.[1] We may observe that this analysis of Aristotle is a very mature understanding of the attitude which is called moral. The Vedic Ṛṣis are innocent of all such theorising. But they, in their wisdom, had grasped that both understanding and feeling are necessary in what is deemed to be morally right. After all, respect is not just outward show of courtesy, nor is prayer, a word uttered by mouth. Devotion depends on the quality of heart which is bettered by intellectual conviction (Niścaya) and emotional reverence (Ādara). This blend of intellect and emotion is moral goodness according to Aristotle; and it is this that the seers were yearning for. They were conscious of their sins and knew well that mistakes lay on the debit side. Thus their attitude is nearer the Aristotelian concept of moral goodness than the Socratic idea that mere intellect drives a man to do good. The Ṛṣis speak of having sinned against gods and men (Devānām uta martyānām), perhaps because they lacked the respectful feeling towards gods or did not show proper honour to them by kneeling before them. This drawback they considered as moral shortcoming. Aristotle would have exactly treated it as lack of moral goodness.

5. An Appeal for Removal of Difficulties. However, the Vedic people no longer seem to believe that a mistake once committed

1 See H.H. Joachim, Aristotle, The Nichomachean Ethics, (Ed) D.A. Rees, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1951, Pp 70 ff

bequeaths a guilty conscience which would be a companion of man here and even hereafter. They would disagree with A.E. Taylor who declares: "Nothing is more characteristic of the human sense of guilt than its indelibility, its power of asserting itself with unabated poignancy inspite of all lapse of time and all changes in the self, and its environment".[1] On such a view the adage, 'saints have a past, as sinners, a future', would be utterly false. Sinners would be eternally damned souls and would continue self-condemnation inspite of a healthy turn to their lives. This is rather a harsh view and borders on pessimism. But our ancient seers would never tolerate this idea. The suggestion thrown out by Taylor towards the end of the discussion would, however attract them. Taylor's remark that, ".... the task of complete transmutation cannot be achieved in our own unaided strength,"[2] would readily be picked up by the robust optimists that were the Vedic Ṛṣis. Well be it argued that not by self-effort alone will the stain be wiped out; yes, but why not by genuine penitence and God's grace? Confession of guilt with a heartfelt penitence and an urge to begin anew, paves the way and God's grace completely whisks disgrace away. As Jñāneśvara says: a dive into sacred waters of penitence and intense devotion to God, is all that is required to become a saint. In this strain Ṛṣi Kūrma Gārtsamada pleads: "Oh Varuṇa, set us free from the knots of evil-doing so that we may attain to the necessary strength for sticking to the rules and regulations. I am weaving a cloth of which meditation constitutes the warp and the woof. Let not the threads be cut off in the middle. I am performing a sacrifice. Let it not be obstructed and left incomplete" (S.16). Perhaps they believe that meditation and sacrifice can adequately amend the past failings. There are again a number of hymns embodying entreaties for removal of obstacles on the way. The obliquities that are committed stand between the devotee and God. They have to be crossed over as a horseman jumps over the hurdles on the way, or as an oarsman rows the boat through waters to reach the yonder shore. "Oh respected Ādityas, let us go beyond the illusions or the meshes you have spread on the way to

1 The Faith of a Moralist, Series I, P. 174

2 Ibid P. 182

inflict punishment on the wicked, as a horseman rides over bumpy terrains. Let us march with dauntless tread beyond all obstacles uninjured, by means of a chariot and live happily under your watchful eye" (S.17). "Oh valiant Indra, pray, enable us to wade through lapses as a man wades through water. Let Truth be my guide. Oh king, when will you accord your highly coveted prizes to us?" (S.18). Tukārāma has spoken of moral slips which hide God's form from a devotee's sight:

तुका म्हणे सरते नव्हेचि पायांचें।
बळ केलें पापें नव्हेचि भेटी॥

(It seems my misconduct has become dense and clouds my vision. I can not see Thy feet). The Vedic prayers were not different. "We are calling out for you, Oh brave Indra, as calves for the cows" (S.19). Or, "a cow waits anxiously to be milked; in a like fashion, come you Oh Lord of the universe, we implore you with our prayers and offerings" (S.20). The Vedic seers have said that our offences behave like thugs. And hence their request is: "Let the robber on the highway be chased and destroyed" (S.21). Distress calls are sent out, firstly, for the removal of difficulties and then, for positive felicity. "We have been thrown over a barren land. Though the territory is vast, it is bereft of all facilities. Enlighten us so that we can procure the cows" (S.22). A Ṛṣi humbly requests: "Oh Agni, clear the atmosphere polluted with guilt and bring me on the straight path. I am a poor little follower of those immortal gods who lead a righteous life of noble deeds like sacrifices" (S.23). "Rudradeva, you are a resident of Kailāsa and look to the welfare of all creatures; be gracious and reveal yourself to me with that form of yours which is taintless, reasurring and auspicious. Shower happiness on me" (S.24). Perhaps aware of backsliding on the moral way the aspirant exclaims, "Oh Agni, bless me once again with that spiritual vision granted earlier. Bring with you a life which will not be defiled by untimely death. Save us from trespasses which are committed unknowingly. Bring us riches that will be sufficient for our people, and which will flow towards us like a torrential river. Protect us" (S.25). "If you have accepted our friendship, Indra, partake of our present of Soma, so that we will conquer the hostile forces. When

will he, who sings your praises be supremely happy? When will you extend to us a grant of cattle and horses?", asks Nārada Kāṇva (S.26). "You had accepted Soma at the dwelling of Vivaswān Manu; you listened to the psalms in the abode of Trita; be now an honoured guest at my place" (S.27).

The evidence of such passages corroborates the thesis that for the Vedic people, sin does not imply permanent condemnation; from a negative stage they would always try to reach a positive one. There may be evil; it may appear in countless guises; it may try our patience; but it is not lasting. There is always a feeling that evil will be overcome; that good will conquer it. We may observe that here are hidden the seeds of the four noble truths (Catvāri ārya satyāni) of Buddhistic philosophy, viz., (1) Life in the world is full of suffering (Duḥkha), (2) there is a cause of this suffering (Duḥkha-samudāya), (3) it is possible to stop suffering (Duḥkha-nirodha) and (4) there is a path which leads to the cessation of suffering (Duḥkha-nirodha-mārga). The Vedas recognised the existence of evil; their naturalistic philosophy found the cause in the anger of the deities; they believed that evil could be removed; the way is to surrender to deities and beg for their forgiveness. The celebrated prayer, असतो मा सद् गमय। तमसो मा ज्योतिर्गमय। मृत्योर्मा अमृतं गमय॥ (Bṛahadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad I. 3.28) (from the unreal, lead me to the real; from darkness, lead me to light; from death, lead me to immortality) aptly depicts their whole attitude towards evil and its removal. They have almost a clairvoyant comprehension of God's power to bring about an evil-less state.

6. Prayer for Light and Protection. Afflicted by an inordinately long spell of darkness in the near polar region of their habitation, the Vedic people always yearned for light of the sun. Tormented by ignorance and sin they longed for the vision of the Sun of Absolute Reality. "Entertaining in my mind a desire for plenitude, I bow respectfully like Angirasa, to that age-old deity and make him young (i.e. renew the long-forgotten tradition of his worship). Oh Indra, destroy those wicked souls that have no element of devotion in them and make the divine light shine before our eyes" (S.28). "What is keeping you engaged, Oh deities? Why are you

lingering? Leave them aside, who, in their pride, do not offer anything to God. Lessen the longevity of those irreligious souls. Make the sun of knowledge rise before those devotees who are singing the praises of God" (S.29). whoever possesses light, is approached by the Muni. "God of knowledge, your devotee like the moon, is welcomed by all. He attains to affluence also in the heavens. Oh Agni, we, your devotees, should also be made participants in the divine bounties" (S.30). "We offer salutations to the shining divine boar with matted hair and with a form that is burning with dazzling splendour; we invoke his presence. May he come with health-giving herbs and shower happiness, fearlessness and security on us" (S.31). There are other psalms in which there is an appeal not to hide the shining light from the sight of the devotee. "Oh you all-pervading God (Viṣṇu), you bear the epithet 'pervaded by the rays of light' (Śipiviṣṭa), then why do you conceal that grandeur from us? Display that form which you take when engaged in battles," says Maitrāvaruṇi Vasiṣṭha (S.32). "Only the learned ones deserve thy wealth. Oh Indra, why not extend thy grace to us in order to make us share in that plenty?" (S.33). What strikes a reader immediately, is that a large chunk of prayers contains a petition for protection from enemies. One does not know whether there were tribal warfares at the time, which made it necessary for the people to seek outside help. But the peculiarity of all these prayers, is that an enemy is sought to be destroyed under the plea that he is irreligious, while entreaties for protection are accompanied by claims of one's own devotion. It seems the Vedic people considered this to be a justification for a demand for help. "Drink this Soma to your heart's content, Oh Indra and Viṣṇu. Kindly accept our presents and sitting by our side listen to our great song of praise" (S.34). "We are your close friends, Oh Indra, we are tirelessly admiring you, help us" (S.35). "Take us back to those happy times, Indra, when we enjoyed a contented life, by shielding ourselves from the accursed enemies. You who are sinless, make us proof against sins. You are a possessor of inscrutable power, guard us on both sides" (S.36). We see clearly that protection is sought both from the enemies as well as from sins. Though the Vedic seers have never had a sick-soul, some kind of wrongs that were committed,

continued to corrode their minds and they wanted to be free from the pricks of conscience. Their minds recoiled from the idea of evil effects. "Oh Rudra, where is your auspicious hand? Where is the hand which held the medicines to cure the sick? Vices grafted on us by some unseen factors, will be scrubbed out only by your hand. Be merciful to us" (S.37). "I have strained Soma and with that offering, I am coming to you with a petition. Let not my words stimulate any anger in you at the time of sacrifice. I have come to ask you a favour, but tell me, who will not ask for boons from the Lord?" (S.38). Sometimes the devotee seems anxious to improve the quality of his heart so that his call reaches God. Ṛṣi Gotama Rāhūgaṇa says: "Which invocation will appeal to you and please you? Which song of honour arising from the bottom of the heart, will delight you? Who is he who performed a sacrifice and obtained intellectual eminence from you? Oh Agni, with what feeling should I come to you with my libations?" (S.39). Being sure of his devotion and having mustered up courage, the aspirant exclaims, "those devotees who have control over their minds, and those born in the family of Bhṛgu, might have sung hoarse your flatteries. But come to me, Oh illustrious one, in response to my supplication" (S.40). Again, "we are asking you for our share; your shelter is our greatest support; and therefore your bliss should also be ours" (S.41). God is a rock to which the devotee clings.

7. An Apparent Rebuke. When a great number of prayers go fruitless, the most natural turn a man's mind takes, is to challenge God or level charges against Him. Friction begins, a spark is kindled, and there is fire; but as the sage's disappointment was never deep the recriminatory words also are not very sharp. They never took the extreme form of abuse which we find in Tukārāma when he quarrelled with God: माइया लेखीं देव मेला। असो त्याला असेल ॥ गोष्टी न करी नांव नेघे . (To me, God is dead. Let Him exist for him whosoever believes in Him. I shall no longer speak about God. I shall not meditate on His name). In Vedic literature the whole process of denouncing God for not showering His boons, proceeds on a somewhat low key. Many verses which seem to embody an indictment sound like prayers. The piercing quality of a real

accusation arising out of intense anguish is not found in the Vedas. The impeachment is too tame and the language too soft. Here is an example from sage Sobhari Kāṇva: "We are saluting you and praying to you. Why should you not make up your mind? Oh Indra of swift horses, you know full well our desires. You are generous and we who belong to you have our minds fixed on you" (S.42). "How many times should I repeat my prayers? You destroy the sinners; which sacrifice will please you?" (S.43). The deities are made aware of having accepted the friendship of the devotee and then having forsaken them. The Ṛṣi who is eager to see Varuṇa, thinks aloud, "should I, on my own, approach Him? When can I discern his inner thoughts? Will he accept my offering without a trace of anger? When shall I, with my mind composed see Varuṇa?... What wrong have I committed, Oh Varuṇa, so that you should destroy your friend, the singer? Oh Varuṇa of burning brightness, tell me my sin so that I shall be free from it by your worship and be absorbed in your prayers" (S.44). "You are not deaf; on the contrary, you are kind and have sharp ears; that is why we call on you even from a distance. We wish that you listen to our appeals; give us strength and be our dear and near friend. Whenever we are exasperated, we meditate on you. Should you not understand this deplorable state of ours? As old men lean on their staff, we are leaning on you who are very strong. We ardently desire that you should be present at our sacrifice" (S.45). "We always crave your indulgence Oh Agni, who are a messenger of the immortal and powerful gods and who are praise-worthy. If we really cherish mutual love, your benediction will come true" (S.46).

There are also appeals not to cut off the time-honoured bond of love. "Oh Agni, you are a gifted and illumined soul. Do not cut asunder the bond of mutual attachment that has been existing between us since the time of our fore-fathers. Old age like a cloud causes beauty to fade; therefore send your benedictions before old age sets in" pleads Ṛṣi Parāśara Śāktya (S.47). "Where are you? Have you forgotten our kinship, Varuṇa? We long for it. You are wealthy and we shall enter your abode which has thousand doors and which offers shelter to all" (S.48). A devotee requests that he may not be compelled to return to the earthly vesture any more

(S.49). Similarly, "with great ado, you have shouldered our responsibility. Now do not abandon us in a manner in which a man abandons the weight under which he is reeling. Bring success and affluence to us" (S.50). Also present are lyrics which contain some semblance of a dispute: "Are you not named as one who heeds a devotee's prayers? Are you not he who protects us from the wicked? How can you keep quiet when we are subjected to humiliation? Throw your weapon, Oh Soma, on these haters of Brahman" (S.51). "It is futile to call you generous. Be true to thy name by bestowing treasures on me. We learn that you are a dispenser of power. Give a turn to my intellect so that it will be engaged in good work. Adorn me with abundance" (S.52). Nāmadeva had quarrelled with God and lay charges at His door. He declared: Though God was known to sanctify even a sinner, Nāmadev had no such experience with Him; and having realised that God was no benefactor at all, he had decided to go back. The same is the purport of a hymn which says: "I had heard Oh Indra, that you the prime mover, bestow riches on devotees. But ultimately, what is it that the friends who pinned their hopes on you, gained?" (S.53).

8. Solicitation for Mercy. In the end it is not expostulation but ardent appeal that melts God's heart. So the Vedic Ṛṣis who have mastered the technique of prayers and who have many a thing to pray for, take resort to that way. Thus we have many a marvellous poem in the Vedas which seek God's grace for spiritual experience. However, a considerable number of prayers seem to be concerned with requests for food, health, wealth, cattle, progeny, happiness and victory over enemy. One may perhaps wonder whether the prayers take things that are relatively and temporarily good to be absolutely good. Such an understanding sometimes may cause a little discomfort to a religious man. The things asked for *prima facie,* appear to be trifling. However, these are only symbols of higher and spiritually significant things. Nirukta gives various meanings to these words. Many songs invoke the presence of God near the devotee. "Men perform Soma sacrifice in your honour, the talented ones offer you manifold invocations. Oh Indra, stay not away from us any longer" (S.54). "Hasten to us, you Aświns, both of whom are

brave and handsome. We are praying to you for prowess; listen to those chants and be by our side" (S.55). In a Mantra by Avasyu Ātreya, Aświns, the knowers of Madhuvidyā, are called upon to leave their secret abode in order to reach the devotee's house (S.56). "Which actions of ours will really please you, Oh Indra, so that you will make us valiant like yourself? Guileless friend, when will you graciously come to us? When we desire food, you yourself should feed us" (S.57). Perhaps the difficulties the Vedic people talk about are those on the path of spiritual realisation while the wealth symbolises spiritual bliss. The sage Sukakṣa Āngirasa hums a music-laden prayer: "Oh wealthy and laudable Indra, be determined to guide us along the treacherous path. No one transgresses thy wish, not even the gods. How can a poor creature like man dare to do so? I am preparing Soma while applauding you. Should you not reward the singers? If you wish to make us happy, give us food and wealth and other means of comfort. Being convinced that you would gladden us, we have kept Soma ready and are calling you" (S.58). "Let us be recipients of strength, Oh Indra, lord of riches; listen to our entreaties for we are your friends. You are a warrior; truth is your weapon. Fight on and make us participants in spiritual wealth which was hitherto inaccessible to us" (S.59). The reference to Indra as one whose strength lies in truth (Satyaśuṣmat) does allow a spiritual interpretation of this hymn. "Oh singer, address your songs in the direction where Indra stays. Let the generous and powerful Indra bestow on us fearlessness, so that we attain to glory. Indra whose arms are as strong as Vajra itself, hastens to his devotees in a chariot with hundreds and thousands of horses. On Lord of plenitude, when you are on our side, we will enjoy the lustrous, praise-worthy and rich bounty (i.e., we will be able to have the vision of the shining form of God)" (S.60). Steep is the path to God-head and full of obstacles. So, an alliance with a powerful friend, is always an asset. "Oh Indra, protect us, protect us today, tomorrow and ever afterwards. Protect us day and night" (S.61). The sages never raised insurmountable barriers between men and gods. With open minds they ask for the cooling mercy of the deities. "Let not my devotion to Indra suffer an erosion. His kindness itself is the cow which fulfils my desires. His arm is my armour. With his help, may I be

successful in every battle" (S.62). "With the strength of your chaste mind, you are able to checkmate your enemies in battles. Pray, make our minds also purified and pious so that we may also gain victory in battles against the anarchists. Oh Agni, strong though the traitors' forces are, make short work of them. With your help we shall attain to our goal" (S.63). God remains behind closed doors and the devotee ardently prays that God should reveal Himself. Sage Bṛhaduktha Vāmadevya is waiting for undisclosed spiritual treasures. "Thou holdest in thy sole possession all the valuable things, whether manifest, or hidden from the ken of an ordinary person. Oh Maghavan, pray, do not keep me away from the fulfilment of my longing. You are both the director and donor" (S.64). And again, "mysterious are the ways of Agni, as difficult to fathom as are the waves in a water-fall. That omnipotent and adorable Agni brings to the devotees rich gifts whether manifest or concealed" (S.65). In another place, the function of displaying treasures is attributed to the Maruts (S.66). "I offer my humble homage to the most venerable God Agni, who never fails to fulfil the desires of his devotees. Pray, Oh merciful God, grant us imperishable and inexhaustible fortune" (S.67). "I am trying to help the mind to attain concentration. Varuṇa, I make my intellect adept and illumine my deeds, so that I shall overcome all obstructions on the way and climb on a boat which will carry us across to the other shore" (S.68). Or, "let both the sacrificer and myself be crowned with success; let us be victorious; let us have right intellect and unspoilt fame" (S.69). There are requests to God to show Himself. The sage sings his way through the dark night to the golden morning. "Salutations to thee Oh God, let the light of your eyes fall on me" (S.70). The vision of God is possible only through His grace. He alone holds the master key to the treasure-house. "It is only when you intend to shower your blessings, Oh Indra, that we are able to experience the vision of the spiritual sun, along with the flood of his radiant rays" (S.71). A prayer to Indra, whom no one equals, runs: "When will you extend to us riches that grow in thousands of ways? Let our abilities be touched with spiritual powers" (S.72). Once the aspirant becomes the recipient of God's gifts and is out of the woods, his disappointment vanishes and he basks in the sun of ecstatic joy. The devotee rests assured that when

he goes in submission to God, He stands by his side as a guardian. "Direct the course of your thoughts to God, just as things are transported across a river by means of a ship. God is omnipresent and is moved by ardent prayers of his devotees. Touch and move that most renowned and generous God; He will certainly respond to your call. Know fully what Indra cherishes. Sing His praises and surrender to Him. Be in His vicinity and do not grieve. Once He hears your heartfelt appeals, He is sure to reward you" (S.73). "Oh Varuṇa and Mitra, you are a mighty support. He whom you shelter never suffers a defeat. Your love is disinterested, Oh Ādityas of wide-reaching intellect; he, whom you choose, encounters no danger and suffers no great pain" (S.74). We are again told that God never keeps His devotees frustrated: "Oh Indra, he who loves you, gets instantly whatever he asks for. Whatever the Almighty wishes to make strong becomes strong" (S.75). Ṛṣi Avatsāra Kāśyapa expresses his confidence: "You exterminate the opponents to the very roots. That is why in the midst of a fierce battle, I do not budge from exalting you" (S.76).

The dark night of the soul is characterised by some of the disappointments but many hopes gather in the mind of the aspirant. It is not the long night of the glacial period but the one that comes and goes. Their hopes do not reach the nadir of dejection for they always look up to the soothing compassion of the divine benefactor. When God has taken it on Himself to watch over his devotee, the devotee's misfortune is at an end; the dark night of the soul is past; the sun of His boons begins to shine and the only vocation for the devotee is to sing the glories of the Almighty.

SOURCES-VIII

1. कस्ते मद इन्द्र रन्त्यो भूद्दुरो गिरो अभ्युग्रो वि धाव।
कद्वाहो अर्वागुप मा मनीषा आ त्वा शक्यामुपमं राधो अन्नैः।। ऋग्वेद X.29.3

2. क्व स्विदद्य कतमास्वश्विना विक्षु दस्रा मादयेते शुभस्पती।
क ईं नि येमे कतमस्य जग्मतुर्विप्रस्य वा यजमानस्य वा गृहम्।। ऋग्वेद X.40.14

3. यस्ता चकार स कुह स्विदिंद्रः कमा जनं चरति कासु विक्षु।।
कस्ते यज्ञो मनसे शं वराय को अर्क इंद्र कतमः स होता।। ऋग्वेद VI.21.4

4. क्व स्य वृषभो युवा तुविग्रीवो अनानतः। ब्रह्मा कस्तं सपर्यति।।
कस्य स्वित् सवनं वृषा जुजुष्वाँ अव गच्छति। इन्द्रं क उ स्विदा चके।।
कं ते दाना असक्षत वृत्रहन् कं सुवीर्या। उक्थे क उ स्विदन्तमः।।
अयं ते मानुषे जने सोमः पूरुषु सूयते। तस्ये हि प्र द्रवा पिब।। ऋग्वेद VIII.64.7-10

5. कदु स्तुवन्त ऋतयन्त देवत ऋषिः को विप्र ओहते।
कदा हवं मघवन्निन्द्र सुन्वतः कदु स्तुवत आ गमः।। ऋग्वेद VIII.3.14

6. कस्य ब्रह्माणि जुजुषुर्युवानः को अध्वरे मरुत आ ववर्त।
श्येनां इव ध्रजतो अन्तरिक्षे केन महा मनसा रीरमाम।। ऋग्वेद I.165.2

7. कया नश्चित्र आ भुवदूती सदावृधः सखा। कया शचिष्ठया वृता।। ऋग्वेद IV.31.1

8. त्वं चित्रः शम्या अग्रे अस्या ऋतस्य बोधि ऋतचित् स्वाधीः।
कदा त उक्था सधमाद्यानि कदा भवंति सख्या गृहे ते।। ऋग्वेद IV.3.4

9. कदा क्षत्रश्रियं नरमा वरुणं करामहे। मृळी कायोरुचक्षसम्।। ऋग्वेद I.25.5

10. यच्छक्रासि परावति यदर्वावति वृत्रहन्। यद् वा समुद्रे अंधसोऽवितेदसि।।
ऋग्वेद VIII.13.15

11. यदिन्द्र प्रागप्रागुदङ्. न्यग्वा हूयसे नृभिः। आ याहि तूयमाशुभिः।।
यद्वा प्रस्रवणे दिवो मादयासे स्वर्णरि। यद्वा समुद्रे अन्धसः।। ऋग्वेद VIII.65.1,2

12. यदब्रवं प्रथमं वां वृणानो अयं सोमो असुरैर्नो विहव्यः।
तां सत्यां श्रद्धामभ्या हि यातं अथा सोमस्य पिबतं सुतस्य।।
यत् इंद्राग्नी मदथः स्वे दुरोणे यद् ब्रह्मणि राजनि वा यजत्रा।
अतः परि वृषणौ आ हि यातं अथा सोमस्य पिबतं सुतस्य।।
यद् इंद्राग्नी यदुषु तुर्वशेषु यद् द्रुह्यषु अनुषु पूरुषु स्थः।
अतः परि वृषणौ आ हि यातं अथा सोमस्य पिबंत सुतस्य।।
यद् इंद्राग्नी दिविष्ठो यत् पृथिव्यां यत् पर्वतेषु ओषधीषु अप्सु।
अतः परि वृषणौ आ हि यातं अथा सोमस्य पिबतं सुतस्य।।
यद् इंद्राग्नी उदिता सूर्यस्य मध्ये दिवः स्वधया मादयेथे।
अतः परि वृषणौ आ हि यातं अथा सोमस्य पिबतं सुतस्य।।
ऋग्वेद I.108.6,7,8,11,12

13. किमिदं वां पुराणवत् जरतोरिव शस्यते। अन्ति षद्भूतु वामवः।। ऋग्वेद VIII.73.11

14. अव स्पृधि पितरं योधि विद्वान् पुत्रो यस्ते सहसः सून ऊहे।
कदा चिकित्वो अभि चक्षसे नोऽग्ने कदाँ ऋतचिद् यातयासे।। ऋग्वेद V.3.9

15. यच्चिद्धि ते पुरुषत्रा यविष्ठाऽचित्तिभिश्चकृमा कच्चिदागः।
कृधीष्व स्माँ अदितेरनागान् व्येनांसि शिश्रथो विष्वगग्ने।।
महश्चिदग्न एनसो अभीक ऊर्वाद् देवानामुत मर्त्यानाम्।
मा ते सखायः सदमिद् रिषाम यच्छा तोकाय तनयाय शं योः।।
ऋग्वेद IV.12.4, 5

16. वि मच्छ्रथाय रशनामिवाग ऋध्याम ते वरुण स्वाम् ऋतस्य।
मा तंतुश्छेदि वयतो धियं मे मा मात्रा शार्यपसः पुर ऋतोः।। ऋग्वेद II.28.5

17. या वो माया अभिद्रुहे यजत्राः पाशा आदित्या रिपवे विचृत्ताः।
अश्वीव तान् अति येषं रथेनारिष्टा उरावा शर्मनूत्स्याम।। ऋग्वेद II.27.16

18. तन्म ऋतमिन्द्र शूर चित्र पात्वपो न वज्रिन् दुरिताति पर्षिभूरि।
कदा न इन्द्र राय आ दशस्येर्विश्व प्न्यस्य स्पृहयाय्यस्य राजन्।। ऋग्वेद VIII.97.15

19. इमा उत्वा शतक्रतोऽभि प्र णोनुवुर्गिरः। इन्द्र वत्सं न मातरः।। ऋग्वेद VI.45.25

20. अभि त्वा शूर नोनुमोऽदुग्धा इव धेनवः।
ईशानमस्य जगतः स्वर्दृशमीशानमिन्द्र तस्थुषः।। ऋग्वेद VII.32.22

21. अप त्यं परिपंथिनं मुषीवाणं हुरश्चितम्। दूरमधि स्नुतेरज।। ऋग्वेद I.42.3

22. अगव्यूति क्षेत्रमागन्म देवा उर्वी सती भूमिरंहूरणाभूत्।
बृहस्पते प्र चिकित्सा गविष्टावित्था सते जरित्र इंद्र पंथाम्।। ऋग्वेद VI.47.20

23. परि माग्ने दुश्चरितात् बाधस्वा मा सुचरिते भज।
उदायुषा स्वायुषोदस्थाममृताँ अनु।। यजुर्वेद IV.28

24. या ते रुद्र शिवा तनूरघोरापापकाशिनी।
तया नस्तन्वा शंतमया गिरिशंताभि चाकशीहि।। यजुर्वेद XVI.2

25. पुनरूर्जा नि वर्त्तस्व पुनरग्न इषाऽऽयुषा। पुनर्नः पाहि अंहसः।।
सह रय्या नि वर्तस्व अग्ने पिन्वस्व धारया। विश्वप्न्या विश्वतस्परि।।
यजुर्वेद XII.9, 10

26. यदि मे सख्यमावर इमस्य पाहि अंधसः। येन विश्वा अति द्विषो अतारिम।।
कदा त इंद्र गिर्वणः स्तोता भवाति शंतमः। कदा नो गव्ये अश्व्ये वसौ दधः।।
ऋग्वेद VIII.13.21,22

27. यथा मनौ विवस्वति सोमं शक्रापिबः सुतम्।
यथा त्रिते छंद इन्द्र जुजोषस्यायौ मादयसे सचा।। ऋग्वेद VIII.52.1

28. तमङ्गिरस्वन्नमसा सपर्यन नव्यं कृणोमि सन्यसे पुराजाम्।
द्रुहो वि याहि बहुला अदेवीः स्वश्च नो मघवन् त्सातये धाः।। ऋग्वेद III.31.19

29. किमत्र दस्रा कृणुथः किमासाथे जनो यः कश्चिदहविर्महीयते।
अति क्रमिष्टं जुरतं पणेरसुं ज्योतिर्विप्राय कृणुतं वचस्यवे।। ऋग्वेद I.182.3

30. स चन्द्रो विप्र मर्त्यो महो व्राधन्तमो दिवि। प्रपेत ते अग्ने वनुषः स्याम।।
ऋग्वेद I.150.3

31. दिवो वराहमरुषं कपर्दिनं त्वेषं रूपं नमसा निह्वयामहे।
हस्ते बिभ्रद् भेषजा वार्याणि शर्म वर्म च्छर्दिरस्मभ्यं यंसत्।। ऋग्वेद I.114.5

32. किमित् ते विष्णो परिचक्ष्यं भूत् प्र यद् ववक्षे शिपिविष्टो अस्मि।
मा वर्पो अस्मदप गूह एतद् यदन्यरूपः समिथे बभूथ।। ऋग्वेद VII.100.6

33. इंद्र य उ नु ते अस्ति वाजो विप्रेभिः सनित्वः। अस्माभिः सु तं सनुहि।।
ऋग्वेद VIII.81.8

34. इन्द्राविष्णू पिवतं मध्वो अस्य सोमस्य दस्रा जठरं पृणेथाम्।
आ वामन्धांसि मदिराण्यग्मन्नुप ब्रह्माणि शृणुतं हवं मे।। ऋग्वेद VI.69.7

35. वयमिन्द्र त्वे सचा वयं त्वाभि नोनुमः। अस्माँ अस्माँ इदुदव।। ऋग्वेद IV.32.4

36. एभिर्न इन्द्राहभिर्दशस्य दुर्मित्रासो हि क्षितयः पवन्ते।
प्रति यच्चष्टे अनृतमनेना अव द्विता वरुणो मायी नः सात्।। ऋग्वेद VII.28.4

37. क्व स्य ते रुद्रमृळयाकुर्हस्तो यो अस्ति भेषजो जलाषः।
अपभर्ता रपसो दैव्यस्याभीनु मा वृषभ चक्षमीथाः।। ऋग्वेद II.33.7

38. मा त्वा सोमस्य गल्दया सदा याचन्नहं गिरा।
भूर्णिं मृगं न सवनेषु चुक्रुधं क ईशानं न याचिषत्।। ऋग्वेद VIII.1.20

39. का त उपेतिर्मनसो वराय भुवदग्ने शंतमा का मनीषा।
को वा यज्ञैः परि दक्षं त आप केन वा ते मनसा दाशेम।। ऋग्वेद I.76.1

40. य इंद्र यतयस्त्वा भृगवो ये च तुष्टुवुः। ममेदुग्र श्रुधी हवम्।। ऋग्वेद VIII.6.18

41. तमु त्वा नूनमसुर प्रचेतसं राधो भागमिवेमहे।
महीव कृत्तिः शरणा त इन्द्र प्र ते सुम्ना नो अश्नवन्।। ऋग्वेद VIII.90.6

42. अच्छा च त्वा एना नमसा वदामसि किं मुहुश्चित् वि दीधयः।
संति कामासो हरिवो ददिष्ट्वं स्मो वयं संति नो धियः।। ऋग्वेद VIII.21.6

43. दाशेम कस्य मनसा यज्ञस्य सहसो यहो। कदु वोच इदं नमः।। ऋग्वेद VIII.84.5

44. उत स्वया तन्वा सं वदे तत् कदा न्वंतर्वरुणे भुवानि।
किं मे हव्यमहृणानो जुषेत कदा मृळीकं सुमना अभिख्यम्।।
किमाग आस वरुण ज्येष्ठं यत् स्तोतारं जिघांससि सखायम्।
प्र तन्मे वोचो दूळभ स्वधावो ऽव त्वानेना नमसा तुर इयाम्।। ऋग्वेद VII.86.2,4

45. उत त्वाबधिरं वयं श्रुत्कर्णं संतमूतये। दूरादिह हवामहे।।
यच्छुश्रूया इमं हवं दुर्मर्षं चक्रिया उत। भवेरापिर्नो अंतमः।।
यच्चिद्धि ते अपि व्यथिर्जगन्वांसो अमन्महि। गोदा इदिंद्र बोधि नः।।
आ त्वा रंभं न जिव्रयो ररंभा शवसस्पते। उश्मसि त्वा सधस्थ आ।।
ऋग्वेद VIII.45.17-20

46. अदब्धस्य स्वधावतो दूतस्य रेभतः सदा। अग्नेः सख्यं वृणीमहे।।
यदग्ने स्यामहं त्वं त्वं वा घा स्या अहम्। स्युष्टे सत्या इहाशिषः।।
ऋग्वेद VIII.44.20,23

47. मा नो अग्ने सख्या पित्र्याणि प्र मर्षिष्ठाः अभि विदुष्कविः सन्।
नभो न रूपं जरिमा मिनाति पुरा तस्या अभिशस्तेः अधीहि।। ऋग्वेद I.71.10

48. क्व त्यानि नौ सख्या बभूवुः सचावहे यदवृकं पुरा चित्।
बृहंतं मानं वरुण स्वधावः सहस्त्रद्वारं जगमा गृहं ते।। ऋग्वेद VII.88.5

49. मो षु वरुण मृन्मयं गृहं राजन्नहं गमम्। मृळा सुक्षत्र मृळय।। ऋग्वेद VII.89.1

50. मा नो अस्मिन् महाधने परा वर्ग्भारभृद्यथा। संवर्गं सं रयिं जय।। ऋग्वेद VIII.75.12

51. किमङ्ग त्वा ब्रह्मणः सोम गोपां किमङ्ग त्वाहुरभिशस्तिपां नः।
किमङ्ग नः पश्यसि निद्यमानान् ब्रह्मद्विषे तपुषिं हेतिमस्य।। ऋग्वेद VI.52.3

52. किमंग त्वा मघवन् भोजमाहुः शिशीहि मा शिशयं त्वा शृणोमि।
अप्रस्वती मम धीरस्तु शक्र वसुविदं भगमिंद्रा भरा नः।। ऋग्वेद X.42.3

53. एवा हि त्वामृतुथा यातयंतं मघा विप्रेभ्यो ददतं शृणोमि।
किं ते ब्रह्माणो गृहते सखायो ये त्वाया निदधुः काममिंद्र।। ऋग्वेद V.32.12

54. भूरि हि ते सवना मानुषेषु भूरि मनीषी हवते त्वामित्।
मारे अस्मन् मघवन् ज्योक् कः।। ऋग्वेद VII.22.6

55. वयं हि वां हवामहे विपन्यवो विप्रासो वाजसातये।
ता वल्गू दस्रा पुरुदंससा धिया ऽ श्विना श्रुष्ट्या गतम्।। ऋग्वेद VIII.87.6

56. अश्विनावेह गच्छतं तः नासत्या मा वि वेनतम्।
तिरश्चिदर्यया परि वर्तिर्यातमदाभ्या माध्वी मम श्रुतं हवम्।। ऋग्वेद V.75.7

57. कदु द्युम्नमिन्द्र त्यावतो नॄन् कया धिया करसे कन्न आगन्।
मित्रो न सत्य उरुगाय भृत्या अन्ने समस्य यदसन् मनीषाः।। ऋग्वेद X.29.4

58. दुर्गे चित्रः सुगं कृधि गृणान इंद्र गिर्वणः। त्वं च मघवन् वशः।।
यस्य ते नू चिदादिशं न मिनंति स्वराज्यम्। न देवो नाध्रिगुर्जनः।।
आ ते दधामींद्रियमुक्था विश्वाशतक्रतो। स्तोतृभ्य इंद्र मृळय।।
भद्रंभद्रं न आ भरेषमूर्जं शतक्रतो। यदिंद्र मृळयासि नः।।
स नो विश्वान्या भर सुवितानि शतक्रतो। यदिंद्र मृळयासि नः।।
त्वामिद् वृत्रहंतम् सुतावंतो हवामहे। यदिंद्र मृळयासि नः।।
ऋग्वेद VIII.93.10, 11, 27, 28, 29, 30

59. अभिख्या नो मघवन् नाधमानान् त्सखे बोधि वसुपते सखीनाम्।
रणं कृधि रणकृत् सत्यशुष्मा ऽ भक्ते चिदा भजा राये अस्मान्।। ऋग्वेद X.112.10

60. श्रावयेदस्य कर्णा वाजयध्यै जुष्टामनु प्र दिशं मन्दयध्यै।
उद्वावृषाणो राधसे तुविष्मान् करत्र इन्द्रः सुतीर्थाभयं च।।

अच्छा यो गन्ता नाधमानमूती इत्था विप्रं हवमानं गृणन्तम्।
उप त्मनि दधानो धुर्याशून् त्सहस्त्राणि शतानि वज्रबाहुः।।

त्वोतासो मघवन्निंद्र विप्रा वयं ते स्याम सूरयो गृणन्तः।
भेजानासो बृहद्दिवस्य राय आकाय्यस्य दावने पुरुक्षोः।। ऋग्वेद IV.29.3, 4, 5

61. अद्याद्या श्वःश्वः इंद्र त्रास्व परे च नः।
विश्वा च नो जरितॄन् त्सत्पते अहा दिवा नक्तं च रक्षिषः।। ऋग्वेद VIII.61.17

62. न म इंद्रेण सख्यं वियोषत् अस्मभ्यं अस्य दक्षिणा दुहीत।
उप ज्येष्ठे वरुथे गभस्तौ प्रायेप्राये जिगीवांसः स्याम।। ऋग्वेद II.18.8

63. भद्रं मनः कृणुष्व वृत्रतूर्ये येना समत्सु सासहः।
अव स्थिरा तनुहि भूरि शर्धतां वनेमा ते अभिष्टिभिः।। ऋग्वेद VIII.19.20

64. त्वं विश्वा दधिषे केवलानि यानि आविर्या च गुहा वसूनि।
कामम्मिन्मे मंघवन् मा वि तारीः त्वमाज्ञाता त्वमिंद्रासि दाता।। ऋग्वेद X.54.5

65. उदिता यो निदिता वेदिता व स्वा यज्ञियो ववर्तति।
दुष्टरा यस्य प्रवणे नोर्मयो धिया वाजं सिषासतः।। ऋग्वेद VIII.103.11

66. त्वेषं शर्धो न मारुतं तुविष्वण्यनर्वाणं पूषणं सं यथा शता।
सं सहस्रा कारिषत् चर्षणिभ्य आँ आविर्गूळ्हा वसू करत्
सुवेदा नो वसू करत्।। ऋग्वेद VI.48.15

67. ररे हव्यं मतिभिर्यज्ञियानां नक्षत् कामं मर्त्यानामसिन्वन्।
धाता रयिमविदस्यं सदासां सक्षीमहि युज्येभिर्नु देवैः।। ऋग्वेद VII.39.6

68. इमां धियं शिक्षमाणस्य देव क्रतुं दक्षं वरुण सं शिशाधि।
ययाति विश्वा दुरिता तरेम सुतर्माणमधि नावं रुहेम।। ऋग्वेद VIII.42.3

69. अस्मे धेहि द्युमद्यशो मघवद्भ्यश्च मह्यं च। सनिं मेधामुत श्रवः।। ऋग्वेद IX.32.6

70. नमस्ते अस्तु पश्यत पश्य मा पश्यत।। अथर्ववेद XIII.4.48

71. अभि व्रजं न तत्लिषे सूर उपाकचक्षसम्। यदिंद्र मृळयासि नः।। ऋग्वेद VIII.6.25

72. कदा भुवन् रथक्षयाणि ब्रह्म कदा स्तोत्रे सहस्रपोष्यं दाः।
कदा स्तोमं वासयोऽस्य राया कदा धियः करसि वाजरत्नाः।। ऋग्वेद VI.35.1

73. उक्थवाहसे विभ्वे मनीषां द्रुणा न पारम् ईरय नदीनाम्।
नि स्पृश धिया तन्वि श्रुतस्य जुष्टतरस्य, कुविदंग वेदत्।।
तद्विविद्धि यत् त इन्द्रो जुजोषत् स्तुहि सुष्टुतिं नमसा विवास।
उप भूष जरितर्मा रुवण्यः श्रावया वाचं कुविदङ्ग वेदत्।। ऋग्वेद VIII.96.11,12

74. महि वो महतामवो वरुण मित्र दाशुषे।
यमादित्या अभि द्रुहो रक्षथा नेमघं नशदनेहसो व ऊतयः सुऊतयो व ऊतयः।।
न तं तिग्मं चन त्यजो न द्रासदभि तं गुरु।
यस्मा उ शर्म सप्रथ आदित्यासो अराध्वमनेहसो व ऊतयः सुऊतयो व ऊतयः।।
ऋग्वेद VIII.47.1,7

75 उत त्वं मघवन् श्रृणु यस्ते वष्टि ववक्षि तत्। यत् वीळयासि वीळु तत्।।
ऋग्वेद VIII.45.6

76. अया निजघ्निरोजसा रथसङ्गे धने हिते। स्तवा अविभ्युषा हृदा।। ऋग्वेद IX.53.2

CHAPTER IX

Varieties of Spiritual Experience

1. The Faculty of God-realisation. A very important topic in the Philosophy of Religion which is pursued with sustained interest by philosophers is that of the instrument for attaining to God-experience. That intellect alone is helpless in this matter, is accepted on all hands. 'Immediatism' generally gets an upper hand over 'Intellectualism'. The very word immediatism stands for the direct experience of God without mediation of any other faculty — the senses or the intellect. William James had said that, "intellect and senses both swoon away in this highest state of ecstasy."[1] The Bhāgavata, however, does not allow the intellect to swoon away; it assigns a positive function to it. It wants the intellect to adopt a critical attitude. It should make itself superfine by constant meditation on God. "You should, O Lord of men, reflect in this manner on the soul in the body, using your intelligence, aided by logic and strengthened by constant meditation on Vāsudeva" (XII.5.9).[2]

In the sequel we shall note that in the matter of God-realisation, senses are ordered to be out; reason does not hold much credit; we have to go beyond both and take resort to intuition. The Ṛṣis were well aware of this and have prayed for 'divine vision'. For intuition they use significant words like अण्वी धी (subtle intellect) or दैवी द्वार (celestial door) to suggest the super-intellectual faculty. They have also stressed that for realisation we should stop nourishing the ego with its well-defined contours and expand the self in order to obliterate the limits of selfishness. Turning to the marks of mystical experience we find that it is direct vision of Reality and is beyond

1 The Varieties of Religious Experience, P. 316

2 Srimad Bhagavatam, English Translation by N. Raghunathan, Vighneshwar Publishing House, 283, Linghi Chetty Street, Madras-1, 1976, Vol II, Pp. 664-665

space and time. Here one sense-organ can take on the functions of others. Opposites have no place in this field. These experiences verily constitute wealth. The sages enjoyed God as light, as colour, as sound or as nectar. They thrived on these divine gifts.

Reasoned knowledge which is gained through syllogism and which is palpably mediate, can not proceed a step without a flash of intuition. "Deduction is but a series of intuitions whereby terms not directly related are discovered to be related through their relations to intermediaries. Thus by a simple intuition the mind may intuit that A = B and by another intuition that B = C, and by a third that C = D, but in order to see for itself that A = D, that mind has to turn back and forward quickly along the whole series, and by thus gathering them together as the content of a single more complex intuition render the relation of A to D no less immediately evident. The detection of this relation involves a positive increase in our knowledge, and therefore involves that intuitive process wherein alone knowledge can develop."[1] "Intuition", says Descartes, "is that non-dubious apprehension of a pure and attentive mind which is born in the sole light of reason... such intuitions are more numerous than most people are prepared to recognise, disdaining as they do, to occupy their minds with things so simple."[2] Whatever the knowledge process, the step of intuitive understanding can not be dispensed with. If a kind of intuitive insight is necessary even in ordinary perception of objects, how much more would it be necessary in apprehending Reality? Descartes calls this faculty *lumen naturale* or natural light of reason. Spinoza follows suit. Real knowledge is intuitive knowledge; he calls it the third kind of knowledge. This *scientia intuitiva* is said 'not to consist in being convinced by reasons but in an immediate union with the thing itself.' And 'it does not result from something else but from a direct revelation of the object itself to the understanding.' "Thus Spinoza with Plato before him and many others since, held that above and beyond the ratiocination and general reasoning which constitutes the way of scientific thought,

1 Norman Kemp Smith, New Studies in the Philosophy of Descartes, Macmillan and Co. Ltd, London, 1952, P. 70

2 Rules for the Direction of the Mind, Rule III

there is an intuition into individual essences. He held that this kind of knowledge made the possessor one with the object."[1]

Why this distrust of reason? Why is mediate knowledge always looked down upon when it is the question of grasping the ultimate? Because, argues Bergson, as intellect is a special form of life, it can not know the whole of life. A part can not know the whole. And hence the "*insistence on a non-intellectual variety of knowledge*, which is more fundamental and more comprehensive than intellection; which affords, as James expresses it, real "insight" as distinguished from the superficiality and abstraction of intellection."[2] This bifurcation of the powers of the mind and attribution of specific functions to them is by no means a modern concept. The Vedic philosophers were aware of the fact.

2. Necessity of Intuition. A clear-cut distinction is made between seeing with the physical eyes and seeing with the mind's eyes. The Ṛṣis are emphatic that these two visions are categorically different from each other and that one stands head above shoulders of the other in apprehending reality. Hence they pray for the divine vision. Ṛṣi Cakṣus Saurya sings, "pray, grant divine vision unto our eyes so that we may have clear perception. May we be able to behold this world all through and discuss everything clearly. Oh Sūrya, may we be able to behold thy beautiful and perfect form again and again, and behold it quite clearly" (S.1). Indra who is fond of sacrifices and who is able to have supersensuous perception has been a recipient of the sun's rays. The wise sages, like fair-winged birds, approached Indra and prayed: "Oh Indra, drive away the dark ignorance from our eyes and fill our vision fully with heavenly light. Free us who are bound with ropes" (S.2). Sāyaṇa interprets the word Cakṣu in this Mantra as Jñānalakṣaṇa dṛṣṭi, i.e. illumination. It is not ordinary perception.

The bodily eye has its limitations and many Vedic Mantras express a distrust of it. Bṛhaspati Āngirasa says: "One can verily

1 Leon Roth, Spinoza, George Allen and Unwin Ltd. London, 1929, P. 147

2 R. B. Perry, Present Philosophical Tendencies, Longmans, Green and Co. London, 1929, P. 224

see objects in the environment by means of one's natural eyes; yet one is not able to perceive the divine words. One can also hear the words expressed through physical bodies yet one is not capable of hearing the divine words. However, they are automatically revealed to one who is attuned to supersensuous audition" (S.3). Plato was well aware of the unstruck music which a mystic hears in ecstasy. Towards the end of his dialogue Crito, Socrates says: "This, dear Crito, is the voice which I seem to hear murmuring in my ears, like the sound of the flute in the ears of the mystic..."

Seeing without the physiological device is always extolled in the Vedas. "Mortals see only the tangible body; but Munis possess the intuitive power of visualising the spiritual form within that body" (S.4). With the same supernatural eye Indra had the vision of Soma poured in the innermost recesses of the heart (S.5). But alas ! "Every one is not able to grasp things with the inner eye and thus one remains merely on the level of the outer apparatus" (S.6). The mind's eye functions even in the absence of the visual organ. "Being gifted with the vision of the secret celestial eye, they (Mitra and Varuṇa) are able to see better and in a more perfect manner than those who can see only with their empirical eye. They can behold quite clearly even when their physical eyes are closed" (S.7). In fact, the correspondence between the mystic's vision with his eyes open, and the vision with his eyes closed, constitutes one of the criteria of the validity of mystical experience according to Professor R. D. Ranade. The inner conviction of those who have had the direct vision of God, is not to be gainsaid. We may refer the reader to the utterance of Yajña Prājāpatya: "I verily believe, I am actually beholding by means of my intuitive vision the very gods who in ancient times performed the sacrifice and created the seers (Ṛṣis), men and our progenitors" (S.8). There is a Mantra worthy of notice which refers to a similar instance. At the time of a sacrifice, Vasiṣṭha offered an oblation to Indra. The latter accepted it. Vasiṣṭha had the vision of Indra receiving the gift. But all the while Indra remained invisible to others (S.9).

3. Different Nomenclatures. To the non-rational faculty of God-realisation various names like Dhī, Medhā, Manīṣā, Ketu or

Daivī-dwāra have been given. That the non-reflective variety of knowledge grasps more than the logical type, has always been the cry of anti-intellectualists. They may not agree regarding the exact nature of the non-rational way, but they are unanimous in pointing out that intuition is superior to the 'A is B' type of statements tailored by the intellect. In 'A Pluralistic Universe', William James holds a brief for this non-intellectual supplementary though at times it may appear to be forming just an outline round the intellectual nucleus. Indeed, James points out, if the fringe exists, however delicate and indistinct it may be, it should have more importance for philosophy than the bright nucleus it surrounds. For, it is the presence of the fringe that enables us to affirm that the nucleus is a nucleus, or that pure intellect is a contraction, a condensation, of a more extensive power. This kind of intellect supplemented by a superior power is referred to in the Vedas as Aṇvī dhī i.e., the reason which is capable of very minute observation and which is sought after as a prized possession. "Those who were praising the Soma, made him sit on the lap of Aditi and cleaned him with their discerning intellects (Aṇvyā dhiyā)" (S.10). "We, whose intellects are capable of deep concentration and are attuned to gods, submit to them for protection, implore their mercy for welfare and long for the attainment of food" (S.11). The expression Devyā-dhiyā in Aitareya Brāhmaṇa V.2.1 is interpreted by Sāyaṇa as the intellect which kindles up and illumines the form of God and fills the heart with deep devotion to Him (तद्रूप प्रकाशिकया तद्भावनायुक्तया). We may refer to the different qualities of Dhī that are mentioned:

सुश्रूषा श्रवणं चैव ग्रहणं धारणं तथा।
ऊहापोहोऽर्थविज्ञानं तत्त्वज्ञानं च धीर्गुणाः।।

(A desire to hear, study, understand, retain in memory, consider the pros and cons, comprehend the sense and to visualise the truth). It is such a kind of multifaceted ability which deserves the name, celestial intellect. Its greatness is sung endlessly. "Kindle up the divine understanding within and direct your words towards the divine" (S.12). This faculty is allotted the function of bringing forward Agni so that he may accept the offerings (S.13). Parucchepa Daivodasi exclaims: "Oh Mitra and Varuṇa, when by your inherent

supreme power, you dissociated untruth from the Truth, we had the vision of your form in golden light. It was possible not through the endeavour of our imagination, mind, or physical eyes, but through the eyes of intuition fostered by devotion to Soma" (S.14).

Buddhi or intellect can be said to be of two types —Sthūlā and Sūkṣmā. The Sthūlā Buddhi is the logical intellect whereas Sūkṣmā Buddhi or Agrā Buddhi denotes intuition. Self-realisation is achieved by one-pointed and piercing faculty of intuition. Ṛṣi Patanga Prājāpatya says: "The wise men endowed with one-pointed devotion and intuitive mind, perceive the spiritual sun even though veiled by the mysterious power (Māyā) of the Almighty. Piercing through the veil of his rays, they see and get at their source, namely the sun or the Āditya Puruṣa" (S.15). The craving for the vision of God is very intense and if we look to the prayers we find that all the time it is Oliver Twist asking for more. The Ṛṣis ask for more and still more. If they strive for achieving the wonderful power, i.e. Dhī, they also want Medhā, the retentive faculty. Here is an eloquent petition. "Oh God Agni, enrich my powers by that apprehension which is worshipped by groups of gods as well as by fathers" (S.16). "Oh Agni, I pray to you for that talent which is sanctified by Brahman, which is enjoyed by the God-realisers, which is praised by the Ṛṣis and which is abundantly acquired and absorbed by the Brahmacārins. With open arms I welcome that competence which is possessed by the artists, which is comprehended by the deities (especially Varuṇa) and which is held by the Ṛṣis. Make me a master of that authority which is wielded by the Ṛṣis, the creators of objects" (S.17).

In the appendix to the tenth chapter of Taittirīya Āraṇyaka, a distinction seems to have been made between human intellect (Mānuṣī Medhā or Manujā Medhā) and divine intellect (Daivī Medhā). This chapter was later incorporated into the compilation of one hundred and eight Upaniṣads published by Nirnaya Sagar Press, Bombay, as Nārāyaṇopaniṣad. The expression त्वया जुष्ट ऋषिः भवति देवि (by virtue of your grace, Oh divine intellect, a person can become a Ṛṣi) clearly indicates the power of दैवी मेधा. A commentator whose name is not mentioned anywhere in the commentary explains the

term Ṛṣi as अतींद्रिय द्रष्टा, a person endowed with supersensuous perception. He has got real Jñāna. Incidentally, the Mantra is found also in Taittrīya Āraṇyaka (S.18).

We also come across a verse on Manīṣā as a deity. "Pray, may the luminous divine energy hasten to me like a swift steed of a well-equipped chariot" (S.19). For the meaning of Medhā we may refer to Amara Kośa which defines Medhā as धीः धारणावती मेधा (intellect that preserves whatever is learnt). Sāyaṇa in his commentary on Taittirīya Āraṇyaka IV.42.13 refers to it as ग्रंथ तदर्थ धारणशक्तिः मेधा (Medhā is the power which enables a person to retain the contents of a treatise as well as their meaning). In his commentary on वयः सुपर्णा उपसेदुः इंद्रम् (Kṛṣṇa Yajurveda Taittirīya Āraṇyaka IV.42.18) Sāyaṇa understands Priyamedhas as अतीतस्य श्रुतस्य धारणशक्तिः मेधा तस्यां प्रीतियुक्ताः (Medhā is the faculty which enables a person to retain all that has been heard, and Priyamedhas are those who cherish attachment to that power). A subtle distinction between Medhā and Manīṣā is seen in Sāyaṇa, where Medhā is said to be Dhāraṇa-śakti (retentive power), while Manīṣā is described as Grahaṇa-śakti (power of apprehension). His Bhāṣya on a Mantra (Taittirīya Āraṇyaka IV.42.35) runs: मेधा मनीषे माऽऽ विशतां समीची भूतस्य भव्यस्य अवरुध्यैः सर्वमायुरयाणि (May the favourably inclined ability of retention (Medhā) as also the power of apprehension (Manīṣā) abide in me firmly so that I may grasp and retain all that has been learnt in the past and which is being learnt now). Sometimes Agni himself is said to be the penetrating intuition or ray of light, Ketu, obviously because he is full of light of knowledge. Here is a prayer to him: "You, oh Agni, are the ray of intuition in human beings, most coveted and most glorious and established in the centre. Awaken us for prayers and provide spiritual food too" (S.20). "Your devotee, the possessor of intuition, Oh Agni, is absorbed in the singing of Sāma. Bring to us speedily that skill which manifests itself diversely and which is always a valuable asset" (S.21). We may refer to one more passage. "Oh Agni, you stimulate life where there was none, and confer form on the formless. Please reveal yourself with the dawn" (S.22).

The idea that knowledge is kept secret in an enclosed space can be traced back to the Mantras in the Vedas which contain prayers for the opening of divine doors, Daivı-dvara, leading to happiness or success or other treasures as well as to spiritual enlightenment. The desire for illumination is the first rung of the ladder on the way up. Indra is described as a Mumukṣu, who wants to find the treasures of knowledge. "Indra discovered the secret riches concealed in heaven like the embryo of a bird hidden in the interior of a boundless rocky enclosure. The thunderer, Indra, the most distinguished amongst the Āngirasas, swung open, with a desire to obtain illumination, the doors by his thunderbolt and unveiled the hidden nourishing light" (S.23). A very important pre-requisite of self-realisation is self-effort. Indra is described as Vajrin, a wielder of thunderbolt and it is with this weapon that he flings open the doors. There are implorations addressed to the doors themselves to open. "May the divine doors, in response to our humble prayers, swing open, making easy our entry inside. May these imperishable divine doors stretch out into the vast, spreading purity, glory and power everywhere" (S.24). And Sumitra Vādhryaśva says: "Touch the highest peak of heaven or swing wide apart to suit the wide extent of the earth, Ye resplendent doors. Desirous of the chariot of God, please bear in your greatness the divine car" (S.25). The doors themselves are assigned the duty of bringing the divine bounties before the devotee! The doors guarding the secrets of illumination are many times regarded as deities (Dvāra devatās) and their help is sought in all men's undertakings. "Kindly open yourselves, you divine doors, and give easy entrance so as to make our sacrifice fruitful in every way" (S.26). In one hymn we have a wonderful account of how the doors open up along with the frames and reveal unto the vision of the devotee an endless vista of the divine region. The doors are said to be golden, Hiraṇyaya. "The resplendent golden divine doors when adored with the Pavamāna Soma are lifted high with the frames into the vast" (S.27). It is clinging to our self-centred ideas that keeps us away from God and keeps us outside the locked doors; and hence the prayers of Vedic Ṛṣis for the infinite expansion of self-hood which is symbolised by opening the doors. Thus exclaims Jamadagni Bhārgava: "Pray, open yourself, Oh widely

expanding divine doors, with all your grace; Oh divine doors, vast and all-pervading, be easily accessible for the entrance of gods" (S.28).

4. Characteristics of Spiritual Experience. Saints are empiricists *par excellence*. They believe in only what they experience. Aided by the antenna of intuition which catches divine waves, the Ṛṣis gather a plethora of direct experiences. A seer belonging to the remote past vouchsafes that what he describes is *actual* and not *imaginary*. "We portray the Paramātman as we verily see Him" (S.29). Psychologists have characterised that type of imagery as eidetic which stands out as most vivid. For example, a child looks at a picture for a few seconds; it is then asked to look at a grey screen and report what he sees there. An eidetic child replies that he sees the picture on the screen. "He behaves as if it were there. His eyes move from one part to the other, he leans forward and looks hard in attempting to discover a detail, his face may express emotions appropriate to the picture... A good eidetic subject, when asked to describe the picture as he sees it on the screen, will often give an astonishing amount of detail."[1] Mystical experiences can be said to be eidetic i.e. vivid and graphic. However, before employing the term eidetic to characterise mystical experience, we have to take care that the word eidetic is de-psychologised by severing all its associations with imagery. Thus, if in psychology we have an eidetic image, in mystical experience we have an eidetic vision. Again, if in psychology we speak of perception, in mysticism, we speak of super-sensuous experience. There is seeing without eyes, hearing without ears, smelling, tasting and touching without nose, tongue and skin.

(a) Directness of Vision. A graphic picture of visualising the Almighty as a stark reality is found in the utterance of the sage Vairūpa Sādhri. "One bird entered into the vast ocean-like mid-region. He then had a look at the whole universe around him. I with my mature mind beheld Him within myself (at close quarters). The mother caresses Him and He in turn clings to her" (S.30). Sāyaṇa in his commentary on this Mantra (also occurring in Aitareya

1 R.S. Woodworth, Experimental Psychology, P.46

Āraṇyaka, III.6) identifies the bird with the vital breath and the sea with Antarikṣa. God can be realised in one's own heart after one attains to the highest knowledge and cultivates mental and moral excellence. Great is their alterness and boundless their devotion. What is supremely important is spiritual wakefulness.

The directness of mystical experience is brought into bold relief by using the word Pratyaṅ, which literally means 'in front of'. But it implies that God's vision is present on all sides simultaneously. In fact, we cannot go away from that vision. "As we turn ourselves away from it, says Rāmadāsa, it presents itself before us. By no means whatsoever could we turn our back on it" (Dasabodha XX.10.2). God stands facing all directions. He permeates the past and the present as also the future. He instals himself right in front of people and stands face-to-face before them. Here is a record of a direct vision of God. "Born along with the holy law, you are Oh Agni, the very source of all beauty, light and strength. You happen to be ever in the fore-front of a devout seer to whichever side he may turn his face" (S.31). The idea is reiterated in Ṛgveda as well as in Atharvaveda. "You reveal yourself in front of the illumined sages and seekers, so that they may revel in your blissful nearness" (S.32). A single syllable is changed in the Atharvaveda verse. It reads मानुषीः instead of मानुषान्.

(b) Beyond Space and Time. The spiritual object displays one more mark. It defies all ordinary rules regarding space and time. The distinction between today and tomorrow, far and near is foreign to the experience. Time and space, which form the ground of such qualities is transcended in mystical life. "*Here* is where *I* am, *now* is *this* felt present. And similarly, every other part of the actually presented space and time gets a unique qualitative character from its special relation to this *here* and *now*."[1] Not so in super-sensuous experience. The sensuous world is governed by a set of rules which do not apply to the super-sensuous region. Then why describe the spiritual experience in spatial and temporal terms at all? It is because they are indissolubly connected with the finite level to which a

1 A.E. Taylor, Elements of Metaphysics, P. 251

mystic has inevitably to descend when giving expression to his ecstatic experience. Be it so. "The God who nourishes is present every where, in the heavens, in the mid-region as also on the earth. He moves in both the places, near at hand and far away; for both places are dear to him", says Ṛṣi Uparibabhrava (S.33). Or again, "Oh you Agni, you are lovely of form, alike on all sides. Though at a distance, you shine brightly as if close at hand. Things remain visible to you even in darkness. Please protect us who are your friends" (S.34). In a Ṛk which occurs again and again in the Vedas, we are told by a Ṛṣi that "Sages behold the supreme spiritual form of the omnipresent God (Viṣṇu) always, at all times, as if an eye is spread out in the heaven above" (S.35).

(c) Absence of Contradictions. The Vedas give the earliest account of reconciliation of opposites. The super-sensuous perception may sometimes appear funny. In sense-perception, there is division of labour as well as specialisation. No sense-organ would undertake to do the work of another sense-organ. The eye can only see; but it can not hear. And even if the atmosphere is full of reverberating sounds, the eye is not affected by them. Not so in super-sensuous field. No sense-organ is involved and so the question of the pre-adjustment of their functions to outside objects does not crop up. Ṛṣi Kṛtnu Bhārgava gives expression to such an experience. "He covers up the naked and heals all the sick. By his magnanimity, the blind man sees and the cripple walks" (S.36). Indra accomplishes this task in the case of forlorn persons. "You enabled the blind one to see and the lame one to walk. Oh slayer of Vṛtra, no one else can extend such a boon" (S.37). The qualities which appear to be opposite in nature come together in mystical area. Distinction itself is not operative in the arena of one homogeneous Reality. How can there be 'opposites' then? "It is no wonder that the dawn though feetless, has preceded every one having feet" (S.38). The form of God which stands before the vision of the aspirant has no definable size too. It is subtler than a hair's breadth or is not visible at all (S.39). further, no gender is applicable to it. "Thou art male and thou art female. When in old age thou movest with support of a stick and when thou revealest thyself, thy face becomes visible on all sides" (S.40). Such visions constitute imperishable wealth.

Mammon, the goddess of wealth is proverbially fickle and deserts a person any moment. Not so with spiritual treasures which only grow and never diminish. "These riches are not destructible, nor are they liable to be snatched away by thieves. No enemy can ever injure them" (S.41). Gifts that are subject to destruction are as good as not given; and no worldly present qualifies to be called a gift. "Nobody can diminish the glory and loving nature of Savitṛ" (S.42).

5. Varieties of Mystical Experience. God may manifest himself in infinite ways. Let us see some of them as recorded by seers of very very ancient times.

(a) Visual. (i) Light. Light seems to be one of the important types of mystical experience. The brilliance of this light is beyond all measure and therefore it cannot be compared with any earthly light. "The wise men verily behold the shimmering show of the primeval seed of the universe enkindled beyond heaven" (S.43). Where is the place where such light has not entered or where its rule is not observed? "Oh universal God, Fire ! (Vaiśvānara Agni), earth, firmament and heaven together submit to your rule. Refulgent with your perpetual light, you have over-spread heaven and earth" (S.44). 'Lead kindly light', is the perorative refrain of many a Vedic verse. "The great flashy phenomenon has become manifest for the sake of these worshippers. All life has been liberated from the influence of darkness. The 'great light' handed over to us by our fore-fathers has made its appearance, displaying the spacious path of Dakṣiṇa" (S.45). Light has the potentiality to convert an ordinary human being into a holy man. "Oh Aświns", says Ṛṣi Gotama Rāhūgaṇa, "you brought down from heaven that fluorescence to divinise the life of man; pray, favour us by granting that blissful energy" (S.46). The expressions used in the Mantra are Śloka and Jyoti. While Griffith translates the word Śloka as hymn, his revered Master, H.H. Wilson, takes the expressions Śloka and Jyoti to mean adorable light. The word Śloka means an object of praise, and this Jyoti or light is praise-worthy because it has come to sanctify man. We may not bother whether Śloka and Jyoti indicate sound and light or luminous sound. Suffice it to say, that it is a divine seed which fructifies and sanctifies man. It is a heavenly gift which comes down to uplift the

creatures below. Elsewhere it is the Pavamāna Soma or Savitṛ who is credited with having generated the light. "The purifying Soma generated the brilliant flash of light of the Truth and thus destroyed the darkness of evil and ignorance" (S.47). "That immortal light (Jyotiramṛtam) is generated by the creator Savitṛ, for the benefit of mankind. Through God's gracious rule, that Eye has presented itself before our vision" (S.48). (ii) Colour. The light seen at the time of deep concentration on the name of God, is made more charming by the display of colours and the devotee remains glued to it. "Here appears the beautiful light (Vena) draped with variegated colours, with refulgent halo all around, situated in a lustrous chariot. The wise sages caress Him like a child with their hymns at a conclave of the sun and the waters" (S.49). Or, "his chariot displays black, white and crimson colours. It is large, straight and glorious; at times it appears in dark red colour. Prajāpati, the original creator created this form of gold" (S.50). The desire of an aspirant to have a rich experience, is expressed as: "Oh Maruts, be you the honoured guests at my sacrifices; you are known by a multiplicity of names like Śukrajyoti (dazzling like the morning star), Citrajyoti (adored by the rainbow colours), Satyajyoti (who reflects the essence of truth), Jyotiṣmān (radiant), Śukra (white), Ṛtapa (who protects a sacrifice) or Atyamha (emancipated from sin or evil)" (S.51). (iii) Form. As with light, so with forms. There is a bewildering variety of forms that are visualised by mystics all over the world. Vision of that sovereign of the sky, the sun, deserves to be taken first. Plato gives an inimitable account of the vision of the Sun who occupies the highest point in the scale of knowledge and who, as identified with the Idea of the Good, also occupies the highest point in the scale of reality. Thus a Mantra which is found in all the four Vedas as also in the Upaniṣads, says: "Looking at the ever-increasing transcendent Light beyond darkness, we have attained to the vision of the spiritual Sun (Sūrya), the God among the gods, the Light that is supernal" (S.52). And then the all-enveloping character of the spiritual sun: "Here arises the wonderful shining orb of the spiritual sun — the eye of Mitra, Varuṇa and Agni. He enlivens and encompasses the whole static and the dynamic world" (S.53). As the sun is identified with knowledge and moral excellence, darkness

naturally implies ignorance or illusion and sin. "When you, Oh Indra, were engaged in dispelling the dark illusions spread out by the demon Svarbhānu, the sage Atri, by means of the fourth sacred prayer (Brahman), spotted out the spiritual Sun, who had been shrouded all round by the dark veil of ignorance. None else was able to feast his eyes on the Sun-god" says the sage Bhauma Atri (S.54). The fourth prayer may mean the fourth state of consciousness, Turīya, which goes beyond waking, dreaming and deep sleep. Understood in this way Turīyeṇa Brahmaṇā would mean a sacred prayer uttered in Turīyāvasthā.

We may next take a couple of hymns where the experience of a wheel (Cakra) is described. "Delighted by the dedicated worship of his devotee, Trita, the mighty Indra smote off his enemy Arbuda (serpent-like demon) and killed Vala by hurling at him his royal wheel-like weapon (Cakra) sparkling like the orb of the sun" (S.55). We are here reminded of an incident in the life of the saint of Umadi, as narrated by Prof. R.D. Ranade. In 1910 many devotees had gathered at Inchageri, a village in Karnatak, to celebrate the Śrāvaṇa-Saptāha. On the Ekādaśī day (30.8.1910), there was a heavy downpour. A bund in the vicinity of the Math prevented water from draining away. The swollen waters began to creep in the premises where devotees were meditating. The water level began to rise rapidly rendering the situation extremely vulnerable. All at once, Nandyappa, a senior disciple of the saint of Umadi, rushed to the saint's meditation room and apprised him of the serious situation. The saint came out, looked at the sky, bowed to Almighty with folded hands and re-entered the meditation room. A few seconds ticked away and suddenly a huge crack developed in the bund. In a fury the pent up waters danced down averting the impending danger. At the time of Pothi (spiritual discourse) the saint asked Amburao Maharaj, anōther senior disciple, to sing the following verse:

पडता जडभारी। दासीं आठवावा हरी।
मग तो होऊं नेदी शीण। आड घाली सुदर्शन।।

(In the face of a calamity, one should meditate on God, who sees that a devotee does not suffer. He wards off the peril with his discus).

During the discussion the saint said, "नोड्रेपा! परमात्मा सुदर्शन ओगदु बांध ओडदु बिट्टा" (See how God hurled his Sudarśana on the bund which instantly burst open).

Before the vision of the nature-loving Ṛṣis, the form of God descended like a plant, a tree, an animal or a bird. God might manifest Himself in the form of a Kalpa-vṛkṣa (wish-tree), or a Paruṣamaṇi (philosopher's stone), says the saint of Nimbargi. "He who perceives the golden reed (Veta) flashing in the firmament, is verily the mysterious lord of creation" (S.56). We also have a beautiful account of the vision of Aśvattha. "The immortal Aśvattha, the abode of the Gods, is located in the supreme heaven. There the gods enjoy the close vicinity of the immortal Being and partake of the heavenly nectar, Amṛta" (S.57).

One more form is that of a bird. "The celestial bird of reddish colour, ageless, omnipotent and omnipresent, direct visualiser of Truth, is seen approaching. He gains victory over the enemies and distributes their wealth among his devotees" (S.58). "I apprehend from afar, by means of my intuitive mind, yourself ascending like a bird high up in the sky. I beheld your head soaring aloft comfortably through paths unsullied by dust" (S.59). Regarding a saint's direct vision of Atman flying in the sky, Prof. R. D. Ranade used to narrate a couple of incidents in the life of his Master, the saint of Umadi, who was himself a disciple of the saint of Nimbargi. (1) Malakappa Mashal, a disciple of the saint of Nimbargi, used to go to the house of the saint of Umadi (reverentially called Maharaj) for meditation. He would often go to the outskirts of Umadi and Inchageri along with Maharaj and also accompany him to nearby villages for meditation programmes. One day Shri Maharaj, Malakappa and Amburao Maharaj started for Jamkhandi. On arriving at Bijapur, Maharaj said to Malakappa, "look here, you need not accompany us to Jamkhandi. Instead, collect the Abadāgiri (whiskers made of brocade) from here and reach it to Nimbargi. Then straightway proceed to Umadi." Malakappa complied with the request and returned to Umadi. On their way to Jamakhandi, Maharaj and Amburao crossed river Kṛṣṇā at Jambagi. Meditation over, Maharaj lighted camphor. All at once, he looked up at the sky and said, "Behold, Amburaya, Malakappa

has left the body". At that very moment Malakappa had yielded up his ghost at Umadi. (2) There is another instance of Maharaj's similar vision. His grandson Anand, born on 22.9.1899, was a bright boy. Shri Amburao used to say that the child would recite the entire Bhajan quite well even at a very tender age. The boy was about five or six, when he passed away. It was at Inchageri, that one day Shri Maharaj suddenly dashed out of his meditation room and said, "Amburāyā, heat some water for my bath". "Why a bath at such an odd hour?" asked Amburao. "Anand passed away," were the words which Maharaj uttered. He had witnessed the departure of the boy who had breathed his last at Umadi at that very moment. A few hours later a messenger brought the sad tidings from Umadi. (3) There is a third instance which is very significant. Maharaj was present in Nimbargi when Nimbargi Maharaj, his spiritual teacher, left his mortal coil. Maharaj visualised the divine light leaving the saint's body and merging itself in the Infinite.

The vision of Atman or Puruṣa face-to-face is liberation. A Ṛṣi boldly says: "I have personally realised this supreme Being (वेदाहमेतं पुरुषं महान्तम्) who is bright as the sun. It is only by realising Him that one transcends death. There is no other way for final emancipation" (S.60). Sāyaṇa while commenting on वेदाहमेतं पुरुषम् occuring also in Taittirīya Āraṇyaka III.12.16, says that the supreme Being is realised by one-pointed meditation (ध्यानेन सर्वदा अनुभवामि); and hastens to add that Puruṣa cannot be realised by those who are not initiated by a worthy spiritual teacher (गुरुशास्त्रोपदेशरहितैः मूढैः अनुभवितुं अशक्यः). Further, the expression तमेव विदित्वा अतिमृत्युमेति in the above-quoted Yajurveda Mantra undergoes a slight variation and reads as तमेव विद्वान् अमृतः इह भवति in Taittirīya Āraṇyaka III.12.16. The wise man, says Sāyaṇa, who has a direct vision of God becomes deathless in this very life though the body may still cling to him. The realisation that he himself is the Virāṭ Puruṣa or God and not the tenement of clay in which he has taken lodgement, implies that the death of the body does not mean the death of the soul (तं विराट्पुरुषं एवं उक्तप्रकारेण विद्वान् साक्षात्कुर्वन् इह अस्मिन् एवं जन्मनि अमृतः मरणरहितः भवति। यदा विराट्पुरुषः अहं इति साक्षात् करोति तदानीं वर्तमानदेहस्य तत्

स्वरूपत्वाभावात् तन्मरणेन अयं उपासकः न म्रियते). This clearly indicates that the body is not an impediment in the way of realisation. Once a person is free from the illusion that he is the body, he is emancipated. Here we see the doctrine of Jīvanmukti clearly fore-shadowed. The vision of the self by the self is regarded as the highest experience. Ṛṣi Dīrghatamas Aucathya says: "I have seen the Atman who is the imperishable overlord of the senses, moving far and near along various paths. Clothed in the halo of gathered and diffusive splendour, he migrates from one place to another throughout the universe" (S.61). Another account of the vision of Atman is: "The well-fortified city of gods has eight plexuses (Cakras) and nine doors. Within the city there is a golden light-emitting sheath. The dark shadow of pain and misery has no place here. Inside the sheath, which has three spokes and which is firmly supported at three places, there is the great venerable Being, the God Atman, whom the wise alone can realise. This supreme Being, Brahman is the sovereign of the golden city" (S.62).

Yet other forms are referred to in the Vedas. "That Eye, dazzling and god-ordained has appeared before our vision. Pray, may we visualise it for hundred years and live in that state for hundred years" (S.63). This does not mean that God's form is a heteros. The seer himself is God. The Ṛṣis are emphatic about this truth. "Oh Vasiṣṭha, when Mitra and Varuṇa saw you taking the form of lustrous lightning and when Agastya ḥrought you out from the multitude of humanity, it was your real birth" (S.64). 'Vasiṣṭha' stands for the individual soul and 'multitude of humanity', for the body. Yet one more form: "To Medhyātithi, son of Kaṇva, you verily revealed yourself in the form of a ram (Meṣa)," runs a verse (S.65).

(b) Auditory. (i) Musical Instruments. We now turn to the experience of sound. Sounds of different musical instruments, heard during meditation constitute a very common phenomenon in mystical literature of the world. In the Vedas there is a reference to Vāṇa (S.66). Elsewhere Sāyaṇa understands Vāṇa as शतसंख्याभिः तन्त्रिभिः युक्तं वीणाविशेषम् (a harp with hundred strings). Other instruments mentioned are Nāḷī (S.67) and Sasarparī (S.68). The variety of unstruck sounds includes Simhanāda or roaring of a lion

(S.69) or Hastināda i.e. trumpeting of an elephant (S.70). (ii) Words. The sounds of various instruments sometimes take the form of articulated words. Of course, one must have an ear to hear the words; one must be a sincere devotee in order to catch the messages radioed from above. "When the Maruts travel in groups they are engaged in conversation. Rare is he who can hear those words" (S.71). "A fool cannot understand the significance of the sounds which arise when Soma is being squeezed" asserts Ṛṣi Andhīguḥ Śyāvāśvi (S.72). The words are full of meaning. But the meaning is not apparent on the surface. "The gods living in the heavens speak a language by which they understand every thing, but which is not followed by others" (S.73). And then there is Amṛtā Vāk or divine speech. "May the auspicious Aśvins infuse their delightful sweetness in me so that I may be able to address words of glorious light to all the people" (S.74). Those that are not dull of hearing can well take this divine sound as their guide-line. "O Maruts, you are a constant threat to sinners. Your speech guides the holy gods as well as devout mortals engaged in performing sacrifices for attainment of their desired objects. May that speech of yours lead us to realisation of our highest ideal" (S.75). "Let that truth-bearing speech, from which arose day and night, in which the whole world reposes, to which the universe owes its moving power, and which makes waters flow and the sun rise, shelter me from all sides" (S.76). In this Mantra the Speech is indirectly suggested to be the ground of the moral order. But we come across another Mantra where it is called Ṛta. "The highest self, Patanga bears the word within his spirit. The same was expressed by the individual self (Gandharva) from the innermost recesses (the womb) and the sages experience that luminous and blissful word as the basis of the moral order Ṛta" (S.77). In this moral governance lies the supremacy of words.

Sometimes Sāma Mantras are revealed to great souls. The Ṛṣis were the seers of Mantras, they actually perceived Mantras, says Yāska (S.78). Aitareya Brāhmaṇa says, "he saw it and then said it" (तदेतत् ऋषिः पश्यन् अभ्यनूवाच नियुत्वान् इंद्रसारथिः इति). The expression तदेतत् ऋषिः पश्यन् अभ्यनूवाच occurs again in Aitareya Brāhmaṇa X.1.33

and XII.1. Sāyaṇa interprets पश्यन् in X.1.33 as दिव्यदृष्ट्या पश्यन्, ऋषि as मंत्रद्रष्टा or दिव्यज्ञानेन पश्यन्. This clearly points to an intuitive perception of the Mantras by the sages. "You have conquered the valuable objects of the greedy man and have stood adored in your own house, absorbed in meditation on truth, along with the deities. Your devotee is endowed with three kinds of lustre and strength when he engages himself in your prayers that resemble the sound of Sāma coming from a great distance" (S.79). Two Sāma Mantras were revealed to the Ṛṣis Vasiṣṭha and Bhāradwāja. Vasiṣṭha obtained the Rathantara Sāma consisting of two Mantras (S.80) and Bhāradwāja received Bṛhat Sāma, again containing two Mantras (S.81). In Mahābhārata we read: रथन्तरेण तं तात वसिष्ठः प्रत्यबोधयत् (XIV.11.19). Ratha is the body which is not permanent. That teaching which dispels the illusion that it is permanent, is Rathantara. A commentator draws an implication that Vasiṣṭha taught the maxim Aham Brahmāsmi by which the student's wrong notion was corrected. Vasiṣṭha obtained Rathantara Sāma from the shining Dhātṛ, Savitṛ and Viṣṇu. This bears the names Pratha and Sapratha, and is chanted in the Anuṣṭup metre at the time of sacrifice. That secret Sāma, Bṛhat, which enriches a sacrifice, was gained by Dhātṛ and others. Bhāradwāja won it from Dhātṛ, Savitṛ, Viṣṇu and Agni (S.82).

The choicest words that remain are, of course, the names of the Lord. It is ever difficult to describe the melodious nature of the Name. "The wise seers always entertain a watchful look on the vision of Reality and have within themselves the experience of the secret supreme names" (S.83). The names are obviously revealed to the devotees only. "As the oarsman moves the boat, the green-coloured Soma, when being poured out, directs one towards the Pathway to God, consisting in devout prayers. The very same Soma shows the hidden divine names to those who are loudly chanting the praises of gods at the time of sacrifice" (S.84). Well may the names be called secret; they are secret for those who have no longing for God; they are common knowledge for the devout. The door is opened to those who knock. "Oh Agni, we know your three forms and your three resting places. We also understand your silvery name as well

as the source from which it springs," says the sage Vatsapri Bhālandana (S.85).

(c) Gustatory. Coming to the experience of taste, we find that the Vedic Mantras abound in descriptions of partaking of Soma-rasa. The drink apparently means the juice which was squeezed from herbs and strained through a thick cloth for purposes of drinking. That the drinking of this herbal juice was prevalent in Vedic times is well known; but it is not always this drink that is meant in the poems. Unfortunately this draught immortal is many a time mistaken for the earthly intoxicating drink. The Vedic seers have emphasized the less evident but more important truth that only a Brahmajña or one who is awakened in knowledge and none else, can claim the divine Soma. "To Soma the gods owe their energy and the earth, its greatness. Therefore the Soma has been given the place of honour over and above the stars. When the herbal drink is crushed, people take it as Soma. But that which the realised souls call Soma, no one else can partake of" (S.86). The Atharvaveda (IX.1.3) uses the word पार्थिव in place of the Ṛgveda word कश्चन. It makes a better reading, for it clearly says that no 'earthly' being (interested only in mundane affairs) partakes of Soma. Dr. Sampurnanand reminds us that we must not forget what Veda itself says about Soma: "In their desire to drink Soma people press the herb known as Soma; but no one can taste of the Soma which is known to the Brāhmaṇas. This one sentence completely refutes the theory that Soma was an intoxicant prepared from Soma-herb and was used for the purpose for which other intoxicants are used. Quite obviously Soma here referred to is not something material but a subjective experience reserved only for the select few. They are called Brāhmaṇas."[1] By long penance and serene contemplation, they have shed off their earthliness. Significantly, Soma is said to occupy the highest place in heaven, and the mellifluous juice is described as oozing from the top-most plexus, Sahasrāra Cakra. The quality of unearthliness is thus emphasised. Other Mantras repeat it. "Prepare for Indra, the wielder

1 An Introduction to the Vedic Study, Academy of Comparative Philosophy and Religion, Belgaum, 1969, P.52

of Vajra, the delectable heavenly nectar (Divaḥ Pīyūṣa)" (S.87). Hindi saints have deified it by calling it Harirasa or Rāmarasa. The juice which a mystic enjoys is touched by divinity. Hence the sanctifying quality of the ambrosial honey. "The Soma is bright like the sun and is flowing towards a vast lake-like reservoir. He gives rise to seven streams that can reach as high as the sky" (S.88). Here too the process is understood physiologically to mean the flow of ambrosia that is poured into the lateral ventricle of the brain.[1] "The nectar which is ancient and laudable was extracted from the large and deep cave of the heavens. When Indra appeared on the scene, he was given a loud ovation" (S.89). The extraction of nectar from the heavenly cave is certainly the out-flow of drops of the spiritual fluid. What happens is that "every cell begins to discharge 'Amīrasa', or mellifluous juice at the time of meditation..."[2] Only the higher ups in the spiritual line can prepare the Somarasa. "Those whose mind is under control, spread a cloth with thousands of holes for straining the juice. Their speech becomes pure. Their helpmates are the Maruts who are refreshing (इषिर), who are free from jealousy (अद्रुह), who constitute an inspecting squad (स्पश), who move very swiftly (स्वंच) and who have keen and beautiful eyes (सुदृश)" (S.90). This whole process implies meditation in the company of fellow-aspirants. It is no wonder that Soma is called the brain of the cosmic form of God by Ṛṣi Brāhmā (S.91).

Intellectual and moral effects of Soma are recorded. "This is the true nature of Soma. He welcomes the learned who assemble at his place, creates the vast expanse for the sun to move, dispatches good wishes to Manu but condemns the irreligious wicked to hell" (S.92). This divine draught is a prerogative of the devout mystic whose life it enriches. No wonder, for Soma is borne by Śyena or Brahman Himself. Soma is Pavamāna i.e. flowing; it is at the same time purifying. Its cleansing nature becomes all the more eloquent when we keep in mind that Pavamāna is an attribute of both fire and wind. Pawamāna Soma is the life-force of the universe. It enlightens and accords beatitude.

1 Vasudev Saran Agarwal, Veda Vidya, P. 107

2 R. D. Ranade, Pathway to God in Hindi Literature, P. 222

(d) Olfactory. Only a chosen few can have this experience. Vedic sages were fortunate to have it. God is not merely beautiful and sweet-voiced, He diffuses fragrance also. "We worship the three-eyed Lord Śiva who is fragrant and who nourishes all beings. May he liberate us from death as a cucumber is freed from its stem" (S.93). Soma too is described as having the sweet-smelling quality. "Learned friends, may you and we drink the Soma which is brilliant and fragrant and which will enhance our powers" (S.94).

(e) Synchronous. Times are, when a devotee becomes a recipient of more than one type of experience simultaneously. The spiritual bliss over-flows and vitalises the organism from inside, resulting in the experience resembling sense-experience. Of course, simultaneity depends on the powerfulness of the spiritual current as well as on the adaptation of the internal apparatus to catch the waves. The man becomes 'all eyes' or 'all ears' when the vital energy is concentrated in one place and is attuned to God. When the internal sensory apparatus is alert enough to enter into the magnetic field of the spiritual energy, it is blessed with joy; and when more than one sense enter the field, they are all blessed. At the time of such 'cumulative' experiences God's power envelops an aspirant and he responds to it with all his being. "As the resplendent ambrosial juice, Soma, enters into the lateral ventricle (Hiraṇyaya Kośa), peals of unstruck sound are heard" (S.95). If we have a combination of flavour and sound in the above account, flavour, sound and light are woven together in other Mantras. "Soma keeps a watchful eye on men and is flowing in a clear stream. An embodiment of the eternal moral order, he calls out to gods from the highest heavens. He glows in silver fashion along with Bṛhaspati's lion-like roaring. By his libations, the sacrificial halls overflow like an ocean" (S.96). Again, "the sacred flow of Soma made a rumbling sound and at the same time exhibited the kindly light also" declares saint Amahīyu Āngirasa (S.97). On the flavour-minded Vedic Ṛṣis engaged in sincere prayers, God confers the experience of the ambrosial juice; but as if their ardent invocations out-do his gifts, He fondles them with the further bonus of sound and light.

Many are the ways in which God Almighty unveils his

treasures to his devotees. A mystic, claim the Vedas, enjoys God in a number of ways — as light, colour, form, sound, flavour or fragrance. The sages vouch-safe these experiences, of course adding a proviso that they are showered on those who are given to Him in mind, word and deed.

SOURCES-IX

1. चक्षुर्नो धेहि चक्षुषे चक्षुर्विख्यै तनूभ्यः। सं चेदं वि च पश्येम।
सुसंदृशं त्वा वयं प्रति पश्येम सूर्य। वि पश्येम नृचक्षसः।। ऋग्वेद X.158.4, 5

2. वयः सुपर्णा उप सेदुरिन्द्रं प्रियमेधा ऋषयो नाधमानाः।
अप ध्वान्तमूर्णुहि पूर्धि चक्षुर्मुमुग्ध्य स्मान् निधयेव बद्धान्।। ऋग्वेद X.73.11

3. उत त्वः पश्यन् न ददर्श वाचमुत त्वः शृण्वन् न शृणोति एनाम्।
उतो त्वस्मै तन्वं वि सस्रे जायेव पत्य उशती सुवासाः।। ऋग्वेद X.71.4

4. उन्मदिता मौनेयेन वाताँ आ तस्थिमा वयम्।
शरीरेत् अस्माकं यूयं मर्तासो अभि पश्यथ।। ऋग्वेद X.136.3

5. अभि प्रिया दिवस्पदमध्वर्युभिर्गुहा हितम्। सूरः पश्यति चक्षसा।। ऋग्वेद IX.10.9

6. ऊर्ध्वं भरंतमुदकं कुंभेनेवोदहार्यम्। पश्यंति सर्वे चक्षुषा न सर्वे मनसा विदुः।।
अथर्ववेद X.8.14

7. अक्ष्णश्चित् गातुवित्तरा अनुल्बणेन चक्षसा।
नि चित् मिषंता निचिरा निचिक्यतुः।। ऋग्वेद VIII.25.9

8. चाक्लृप्रे तेन ऋषयो मनुष्या यज्ञे जाते पितरो नः पुराणे।
पश्यन् मन्ये मनसा चक्षसा तान् य इमं यज्ञमयजंत पूर्वे।। ऋग्वेद X.130.6

9. ऋषयो वा इंद्रं प्रत्यक्षं नापश्यन् तं वसिष्ठः प्रत्यक्षं अपश्यत्
सोऽ ब्रवीत् ब्राह्मणं ते वक्ष्यामि यथा त्वत्पुरोहिताः प्रजाः प्रजनिष्यंते
अथ मेतरेभ्यः ऋषिभ्यः मा प्र वोच इति तस्मा एतान् स्तोमभागान् अब्रवीत्।।
यजुर्वेद तैत्तिरीय संहिता, III.5.2

10. तममृक्षन्त वाजिनमुपस्थे अदितेरधि। विप्रासो अण्व्या धिया।। ऋग्वेद IX.26.1

11. देवंदेवं वोऽवसे देवं देवमभिष्टये।
देवंदेवं हुवेम वाजसातये गृणन्तो देव्या धिया।। ऋग्वेद VIII.27.13

12. अभि वो देवीं धियं दधिध्वं प्र वो देवत्रा वाचं कृणुध्वम्। ऋग्वेद VII.34.9

13. प्र देवं देव्या धिया भरता जातवेदसम्। हव्या नो वक्षदानुषक्।। ऋग्वेद X.176.2

14. यद्ध त्यन्मित्रावरुणौ ऋतादध्याददाथे अनृतं स्वेन मन्युना दक्षस्य स्वेन मन्युना।
युवोः इत्थाधि सद्मस्वपश्याम हिरण्ययम्।
धीभिश्चन मनसा स्वेभिरक्षभिः सोमस्य स्वेभिरक्षभिः।। ऋग्वेद I.139.2

15. पतंगमक्तम् असुरस्य मायया हृदा पश्यंति मनसा विपश्चितः।
समुद्रे अंतः कवयो वि चक्षते मरीचीनां पदमिच्छंति वेधसः।। ऋग्वेद X.177.1

16. यां मेधां देवगणाः पितरश्च उपासते।
तया मामद्य मेधया अग्ने मेधाविनं कुरु स्वाहा।। यजुर्वेद XXXII.14

17. मेधामहं प्रथमां ब्रह्मण्वतीं ब्रह्मजूतां ऋषिष्टुताम्।
प्रपीतां ब्रह्मचारिभिर्देवानामवसे हुवे।।
यां मेधामृभवो विदुः यां मेधामसुरा विदुः।
ऋषयो भद्रां मेधां यां विदुः तां मय्या वेशयामसि।।
यामृषयो भूतकृतो मेधां मेधाविनो विदुः।
तया मामद्य मेधयाग्ने मेधाविनं कृणु।। अथर्ववेद VI.108.2, 3, 4

18. मेधादेवी जुषमाणा न आगात्, विश्वाची भद्रा सुमनस्यमाना।
त्वया जुष्टा नुदमाना दुरुक्तान् बृहद्वदेम विदथे सुवीराः।
त्वया जुष्ट ऋषिर्भवतिदेवि, त्वया ब्रह्मागतश्रीरुत त्वया।
त्वया जुष्टश्चित्रं विंदते वसु सा नो जुषस्वद्रविणो न मेधे।। तैत्तिरीय आरण्यक VI.39

19. प्र शुक्रैतु देवी मनीषा अस्मत् सुतष्टो रथो न वाजी।। ऋग्वेद VII.34.1

20. अग्ने केतुर्विशामसि प्रेष्ठः श्रेष्ठः उपस्थसत्। बोधा स्तोत्रे वयो दधत्।।
ऋग्वेद X.156.5

21. केतेन शर्मन् त्सचते सुषामण्यग्ने तुभ्यं चिकित्वना।
इषण्यया नः पुरुरूपमा भर वाजं नेदिष्ठमूतये।। ऋग्वेद VIII.60.18

22. केतुं कृण्वन्नकेतवे पेशो मर्या अपेशसे। समुषद्भिरजायथाः।। ऋग्वेद I.6.3

23. अविंदद् दिवो निहितं गुहा निधिं वेर्न गर्भं परितीतमश्मन्यनन्ते अंतरश्मनि।
व्रजंवज्री गवामिव सिषासन्नंगिरस्तमः। अपावृणोदिष इंद्रः परीवृता द्वार इष परीवृताः।।
ऋग्वेद I.130.3

24. विश्रयंतामुर्विया हूयमाना द्वारो देवीः सुप्रायणा नमोभिः।
व्यचस्वतीः वि प्रथंताम् अजुर्या वर्णं पुनाना यशसं सुवीरम्।। ऋग्वेद II.3.5

25. दिवो वा सानु स्पृशता वरीयः पृथिव्या वा मात्रया वि श्रयध्वम्।
उशतीर्द्वारो महिना महद्भिः देवं रथं रथयुर्धारयध्वम्।। ऋग्वेद X.70.5

26. देवीर्द्वारो वि श्रयध्वम् सुप्रायणा न ऊतये। प्रप्र यज्ञं पृणीतन।। ऋग्वेद V.5.5

27. उत् आतैः जिहते बृहत् द्वारो देवीः हिरण्ययीः। पवमानेन सुष्टुताः।। ऋग्वेद IX.5.5

28. व्यचस्वतीरुर्विया वि श्रयंताम् पतिभ्यो न जनयः शुंभमानाः।
देवीः द्वारो बृहतीर्विश्वमिन्वा देवेभ्यो भवत सुप्रायणाः।। ऋग्वेद X.110.5

29. यादृगेव ददृशे तादृगुच्यते। ऋग्वेद V.44.6

30. एकः सुपर्णः स समुद्रमा विवेश स इदं विश्वं भुवनं वि चष्टे।
तं पाकेन मनसापश्यमंतितस्तं माता रेळ्हि स उ रेळ्हि मातरम्।। ऋग्वेद X.114.4

31. अग्ने जुषस्व प्रति हर्य तद् वचो मंद्र स्वधाव ऋतजात सुक्रतो।
यो विश्वतः प्रत्यङ् असि दर्शतो रण्वः संदृष्टौ पितुमान् इव क्षयः।। ऋग्वेद I.144.7

32. प्रत्यङ् देवानां विशः प्रत्यङ् उदेषि मानुषान्।
प्रत्यङ् विश्वं स्वर्दृशे। ऋग्वेद I.50.5

33. प्रपथे पथामजनिष्ट पूषा प्रपथे दिवः प्रपथे पृथिव्याः।
उभे अभि प्रियतमे सधस्थे आ च परा च चरति प्रजानन्।। अथर्ववेद VII.9.1

34. यो विश्वतः सुप्रतीकः सदृङ्ङसि दूरे चित् सन्तळिदिवाति रोचसे।
रात्र्याश्चिदंधो अति देव पश्यस्यग्ने सख्ये मा रिषामा वयं तव।। ऋग्वेद I.94.7

35. तद्विष्णोः परमं पदं सदा पश्यंति सूरयः। दिवीव चक्षुराततम्।। ऋग्वेद I.22.20

36. अभ्यूर्णोति यन्नग्नं भिषक्ति विश्वं यत् तुरम्।
प्रेमंधः ख्यन्निः श्रोणो भूत्।। ऋग्वेद VIII.79.2

37. अनु द्वा जहिता नयोऽन्धं श्रोणं च वृत्रहन्। न तत् ते सुम्नमष्टवे।। ऋग्वेद IV.30.19

38. अपादेति प्रथमा पद्वतीनां कस्तद् वां मित्रावरुणा चिकेत।
गर्भो भारं भरत्या चिदस्य ऋतं पिपर्त्यनृतं नि तारीत्।। ऋग्वेद I.152.3

39. बालादेकमणीयस्कमुतैकं नेव दृश्यते। ततः परिष्वजीयसी देवता सा मम प्रिया।।
अथर्ववेद X.8.25

40. त्वं स्त्री त्वं पुमानसि त्वं कुमार उत वा कुमारी।
त्वं जीर्णो दंडेन वञ्चसि त्वं जातो भवसि विश्वतोमुखः।। अथर्ववेद X.8.27

41. न ता नशन्ति न दभाति तस्करो नासामामित्रो व्यथिरा दधर्षति।
देवाँश्च याभिर्यजते ददाति च ज्योगित् ताभिः सचते गोपतिः सह।। ऋग्वेद VI.28.3

42. अस्य हि स्वयशस्तरं सवितुः कच्चन प्रियम्। न मिनंति स्वराज्यम्।। ऋग्वेद V.82.2

43. आदित् प्रत्नस्य रेतसो ज्योतिः पश्यंति वासरम्। परो यदिध्यते दिवा।। ऋग्वेद VIII.6.30

44. तव त्रिधातु पृथिवी उत द्यौः वैश्वानर व्रतमग्ने सचंत।
त्वं भासा रोदसी आ ततंथाऽजस्रेण शोचिषा शोशुचानः।। ऋग्वेद VII.5.4

45. आविरभून्महि माघोनमेषां विश्वं जीवं तमसो निरमोचि।
महि ज्योतिः पितृभिर्दत्तमागादुरुः पन्था दक्षिणाया अदर्शि।। ऋग्वेद X.107.1

46. यावित्था श्लोकमादिवो ज्योतिर्जनाय चक्रथुः। आ न ऊर्जं वहतमश्विना युवम्।।
ऋग्वेद I.92.17

47. पवमान ऋतम् बृहच्छुक्रं ज्योतिरजीजनत्। कृण्णा तमांसि जंघनत्।। ऋग्वेद IX.66.24

48. उदु ज्योतिरमृतं विश्वजन्यं विश्वानरः सविता देवो अश्रेत्।
क्रत्वा देवानामजनिष्ट चक्षुराविरकर्भुवनं विश्वमुषाः।। ऋग्वेद VII.76.1

49. अयं वेनश्चोदयत् पृश्निगर्भा ज्योतिर्जरायू रजसो विमाने।
इमं अपां संगमे सूर्यस्य शिशुं न विप्रा मतिभी रिहंति।। ऋग्वेद X.123.1

50. कृष्णः श्वेतोऽरुषो यामो अस्य ब्रध्न ऋज्र उत शोणो यशस्वान्।
हिरण्यरूपं जनिता जजान।। ऋग्वेद X.20.9

51. शुक्रज्योतिश्च चित्रज्योतिश्च सत्यज्योतिश्च ज्योतिष्माँश्च।
शुक्रश्च ऋतपाश्चात्यंहाः। यजुर्वेद XVII.80

52. उद् वयं तमसस्परि ज्योतिष्पश्यंत उत्तरम्। देवं देवत्रा सूर्यमगन्म ज्योतिरुत्तमम्।।
ऋग्वेद I.50.10

53. चित्रं देवानामुदगादनीकं चक्षुर्मित्रस्य वरुणस्याग्नेः।
आप्रा द्यावापृथिवी अन्तरिक्षं सूर्य आत्मा जगतस्तस्थुषश्च।। ऋग्वेद I.115.1

54. स्वर्भानोरध यदिंद्र माया अवो दिवो वर्तमाना अवाहन्।
गूळ्हं सूर्यं तमसापव्रतेन तुरीयेण ब्रह्मणाविंददत्रिः।।

यं वै सूर्य स्वर्भानुनिस्तमसाविध्यदासुरः।
अत्रयस्तमन्वविंदन् नह्यन्ये अशक्नुवन्।। ऋग्वेद V.40.6, 9

55. अस्य सुवानस्य मंदिनः त्रितस्य न्यर्बुदं वावृधानो अस्तः।
अवर्तयत् सूर्यो न चक्रं भिनत् वलमिंद्रो अंगिरस्वान्।। ऋग्वेद II.11.20

56. यो वेतसं हिरण्ययं तिष्ठंतं सलिले वेद। स वै गुह्यः प्रजापतिः।। अथर्ववेद X.7.41

57. अश्वत्थो देवसदनः तृतीयस्यामितो दिवि।
तत्रामृतस्य चक्षणं देवाः कुष्ठमवन्वत।। अथर्ववेद V.4.3

58. शाक्मना शाको अरुणः सुपर्ण आ यो महः शूरः सनादनीळः।
यच्चिकेत सत्यमित् तत्र मोघं वसु स्पार्हमुत जेतोत दाता।। ऋग्वेद X.55.6

59. आत्मानं ते मनसारादजानामवो दिवा पतयंतं पतंगम्।
शिरो अपश्यं पथिभिः सुगेभिररेणुभिर्जेहमानं पतत्रि।। ऋग्वेद I.163.6

60. वेदाहं एतं पुरुषं महान्तं आदित्यवर्णं तमसः परस्तात्।
तमेव विदित्वाति मृत्युमेति नान्यः पंथा विद्यते अयनाय।। यजुर्वेद XXXI.18

61. अपश्यम् गोपां अनिपद्यमानं आ च परा च पथिभिश्चरंतम्।
स सध्रीचीः स विषूचीः वसानः आ वरीवर्ति भुवनेष्वंतः।। ऋग्वेद I.164.31

62. अष्टाचक्रा नवद्वारा देवानां पूः अयोध्या।
तस्यां हिरण्ययः कोशः स्वर्गो ज्योतिषावृतः।।

तस्मिन् हिरण्यये कोशे त्र्यरे त्रिप्रतिष्ठिते।
तस्मिन् यद् यक्षमात्मन्वत् तद्वै ब्रह्मविदो विदुः।।

प्रभ्राजमानां हरिणीं यशसा संपरीवृताम्।
पुरं हिरण्ययीं ब्रह्मा विवेशापराजिताम्।। अथर्ववेद X.2.31-33

63. तच्चक्षुर्देवहितं शुक्रमुच्चरत्। पश्येम शरदः शतं जीवेम शरदः शतम्।।
ऋग्वेद VII.66.16

64. विद्युतो ज्योतिः परि संजिहानं मित्रावरुणा यदपश्यतां त्वा।
तत् ते जन्मोतैकं वसिष्ठागस्त्यो यत् त्वा विश आजभार।। ऋग्वेद VII.33.10

65. इत्था धीवन्तमद्रिवः काण्वं मेध्यातिथिम्। मेषो भूतोऽभि यन्नयः।। ऋग्वेद VIII.2.40

66. उत् ते शुष्मास ईरते सिंधोरूर्मेरिव स्वनः। वाणस्य चोदया पविम्।। ऋग्वेद IX.50.1

67. इदं यमस्य सादनं देवमानं यदुच्यते।
इयमस्य धम्यते नाळीरयं गीर्भिः परिष्कृतः।। ऋग्वेद X.135.7

68. ससर्परीरमतिं बाधमाना बृहन्मिमाय जमदग्निदत्ता।
आ सूर्यस्य दुहिता ततान श्रवो देवेषु अमृतमजुर्यम्।।

ससर्परीरभरत् तूयमेभ्यो ऽ धि श्रवः पांचजन्यासु कृष्टिषु।
सा पक्ष्या नव्यमायुर्दधाना यां मे पलस्तिजमदग्नयो ददुः।। ऋग्वेद III.53.15, 16

69. तं वर्धयंतो मतिभिः शिवाभिः सिंहमिव नानदतं सधस्थे।
बृहस्पतिं वृषणं शूरसातौ भरेभरे अनुमदेम जिष्णुम्।। ऋग्वेद X.67.9

70. अश्वपूर्वां रथमध्यां हस्तिनादप्रमोदिनीम्।
श्रियं देवीमुप ह्वये श्रीर्मा देवी जुषताम्।। ऋग्वेद (खिलसूक्त) XI.3

71. यत् ह यांति मरुतः सं ह ब्रुवते ऽध्वन्ना। शृणोति कश्चिदेषाम्।। ऋग्वेद I.37.13

72. प्र सुन्वानस्यांधसो मर्तो न वृत तद्वचः।
अप श्वानमराधसं हता मखं न भृगवः।। ऋग्वेद IX.101.13

73. तिस्रो मातृस्त्रीन् पितॄन् बिभ्रदेक ऊर्ध्वस्तस्थौ नेमव ग्लापयन्ति।
मन्त्रयन्ते दिवो अमुष्य पृष्ठे विश्वविदं वाचमविश्वमिन्वाम्।। ऋग्वेद I.164.10

74. अश्विना सारघेण मा मधुनांक्तं शुभस्पती। यथा भर्गस्वतीं वाचमावदानि जनाँ अनु।।
अथर्ववेद VI.69.2

75. वामी वामस्य धूतयः प्रणीतिरस्तु सूनृता।
देवस्य वा मरुतो मर्त्यस्य वेजानस्य प्रयज्यवः।। ऋग्वेद VI.48.20

76. सा मा सत्योक्तिः परि पातु विश्वतो द्यावा च यत्र ततनन्नहानि च।
विश्वमन्यन्नि विशते यदेजति विश्वा हापो विश्वाहोदेति सूर्यः।। ऋग्वेद X.37.2

77. पतंगो वाचं मनसा बिभर्ति तां गंधर्वो अवदन् दर्भे अंतः।
तां द्योतमानां स्वर्यं मनीषाम् ऋतस्य पदेय कवयो नि पांति।। ऋग्वेद X.177.2

78. ऋषिः दर्शनात्। स्तोमान् ददर्श इति औपमन्यवः।
तद् यद् एनाँ स्पतस्यमानान् ब्रह्म स्वयंभु अभ्यानर्षत्
तद् ऋषीणां ऋषित्वम् इति विज्ञायते। निरुक्त II.11

79. त्वं त्यत् पणीनां विदो वसु सं मातृभिर्मर्जयसि स्व आ दम ऋतस्य धीतिभिर्दमे।
परावतो न साम तद् यत्रा रणंति धीतयः।
त्रिधातुभिररुषीभिर्वयो दधे रोचमानो वयो दधे।। ऋग्वेद IX.111.2

80. अभि त्वा शूर नोनुमो ऽ दुग्धा इव धेनवः।
ईशानमस्य जगतः स्वर्दृशमीशानमिन्द्र तस्थुषः।।

न त्वावां अन्यो दिव्यो न पार्थिवो न जातो न जनिष्यते।
अश्वायन्तो मघवन्निंद्र वाजिनो गव्यन्तस्त्वा हवामहे।। ऋग्वेद VII.32.22-23

81. त्वामिद्धि हवामहे साता वाजस्य कारवः।
त्वां वृत्रेष्विंद्र सत्पतिं नरस्त्वां काष्ठास्वर्वतः।।

स त्वं नश्चित्र वज्रहस्त धृष्णुया महः स्तवानो अद्रिवः।
गामश्वं रथ्यमिन्द्र सं किर सत्रा वाजं न जिग्युषे।। ऋग्वेद VI.46.1, 2

82. प्रथश्च यस्य सप्रथश्च नामाऽऽनुष्टुभस्य हविषो हविर्यत्।
धातुर्द्युतानात् सवितुश्च विष्णो रथन्तरमा जभारा वसिष्ठः।।

अविन्दन्ते अतिहितं यदासीद्यज्ञस्य धाम परमं गुहा यत्।
धातुर्द्युतानात् सवितुश्च विष्णोर्भरद्वाजो बृहदा चक्रे अग्नेः।। ऋग्वेद X.181.1, 2

83. समानं नीळं वृषणो वसानाः सं जग्मिरे महिषा अर्वतीभिः।
ऋतस्य पदं कवयो नि पांति गुहा नामानि दधिरे पराणि।। ऋग्वेद X.5.2

84. हरिः सृजानः पथ्यामृतस्येयर्ति वा च मरितेव नावम्।
देवो देवानां गुह्यानि नामा ऽ ऽ विष्कृणोति बर्हिषि प्रवाचे।। ऋग्वेद IX.95.2

85. विद्मा ते अग्ने त्रेधा त्रयाणि विद्मा ते धाम विभृता पुरुत्रा।
विद्मा ते नाम परमं गुहायत् विद्मा तमुत्सं यत आजगन्थ।। ऋग्वेद X.45.2

86. सोमेनादित्या बलिनः सोमेन पृथिवी मही।
अथो नक्षत्राणामेषामुपस्थे सोम आहितः।।

सोमं मन्यते पपिवान् यत् सं पिंषंत्योषधिम्।
सोमं यं ब्रह्माणो विदुर्न तस्याश्नाति कश्चन।। ऋग्वेद X.85.2, 3

87. दिवः पीयूषमुत्तमं सोममिन्द्राय वज्रिणे। सुनोता मधुमत्तमम्।। ऋग्वेद IX.51.2

88. अयं सूर्य इवोपदृगयं सरांसि धावति। सप्त प्रवत आ दिवम्।। ऋग्वेद IX.54.2

89. दिवः पीयूषं पूर्व्यं यदुकथ्यं महो गाहाद्दिव आ निरधुक्षत।
इन्द्रमभि जायमानं समस्वरन्।। ऋग्वेद IX.110.8

90. सहस्रधारे विततेे पवित्र आ वाचं पुनन्ति कवयो मनीषिणः।
रुद्रास एषामिषिरासो अद्रुहः स्पशः स्वञ्चः सुदृशो नृचक्षसः।। ऋग्वेद IX.73.7

91. सोमो राजा मस्तिष्को द्यौरुत्तरहनुः पृथिवी अधरहनुः। अथर्ववेद IX.7.2

92. तन्नु सत्यं पवमानस्यास्तु यत्र विश्वे कारवः संनसन्त।
ज्योतिर्यदह्ने अकृणोदु लोकं प्रावन्मनुं दस्यवे करभीकम्।। ऋग्वेद IX.92.5

93. त्र्यंबकं यजामहे सुगंधिं पुष्टिवर्धनम्।
उर्वारुकमिव बंधनात् मृत्योः मुक्षीय मामृतात्। यजुर्वेद III.60

94. तं सखायः पुरोरुचं यूयं वयं च सूरयः।
अश्याम वाजगंध्यं सनेम वाजस्पत्यम्।। ऋग्वेद IX.98.12

95. अव द्युतानः कलशाँ अचिक्रदन्नृभिर्येमानः कोश आ हिरण्यये।
अभीमृतस्य दोहना अनूषताऽधि त्रिपृष्ठ उषसो वि राजति।। ऋग्वेद IX.75.3

96. सोमस्य धारा पवते नृचक्षस ऋतेन देवान् हवते दिवस्परि।
बृहस्पते रवथेना वि दिद्युते समुद्रासो न सवनानि विव्यचुः।। ऋग्वेद IX.80.1

97. पवमानो अजीजनद्दिवश्चित्रं न तन्यतुम्। ज्योतिर्वैश्वानरं बृहत्।। ऋग्वेद IX.61.16

CHAPTER X

Effects of God-realisation

A Vedic sing-song holding up a picture of Elysium runs: "Being solely devoted to the majestic God and humming his praises, we have crossed over the limits of deep ignorance. The devotee is offering his praises to the Almighty, the immortal One" (S.1). This is an ideal place where knowledge and immortality await a devotee. Many more such lyrics are to greet us now. We have hitherto traced the journey of an aspirant on the spiritual path, partly hazardous, partly dark but ultimately full of light and sweetness. It now remains to take a survey of effects of God-realisation. Destruction of ignorance paves the way for attainment of true knowledge. The highest principle is recognised as the indwelling spirit of the universe. A conviction of the triumph of piety follows immediately. Evil may be present in the world but it has no demoralising effect on the released soul. The jubilant sage is eloquent in expressing his bliss which is the same as immortality. After reaching his cherished goal of unison with the Supreme, the Ṛṣi chants universal prayers.

1. Dawn of Knowledge. There is a graphic account of how a saint's ignorance is dispelled. "We have now jumped over the boundaries of darkness once for all. Dawn of illumination shines forth in all her manifestations of consciousness with her graceful and attractive smiles" (S.2). The comparison of ignorance with darkness and of knowledge with light has seized the imagination of men since the nebulous antiquity of the Vedic period. The *concept* dark night is frightening but not the *fact*. The Ṛṣis toil far through the waning night into the waxing day. The way to this lustrous region is along the moral law. Ṛṣi Nidhruvi Kāśyapa tells us that "these tawny coloured drops of Soma guide the devotee along the course of the eternal law (Ṛta) beyond any deceit or error" (S.3). This is the hallowed region of the highest Brahman. Knowledge will be worth the name only if the highest is deemed to be the object of its attainment. If one enjoys an ode for the sake of the tune and does

not catch the message, it is of no use. "What has he to do with the letters of the Veda who does not know its theme, namely, the attainment of almighty ruler of the supreme region in which the Devas dwell? But those who have come to know Him are perfect" (S.4). The vision of such persons is so much absorbed in God that they are oblivious of the distinctions found in the mundane world. The saint of Nimbargi uttered : "If you term that Reality a boy, I will call it a girl; you name It a girl and I say, a boy." This is the implication of a Vedic passage : "They tell me that these were males though as a physiological fact they were females. One who has the mystical eye sees the truth; the spiritually blind are not able to discern It. The son may realise the truth while the father may not. The son on account of his mystical wisdom is virtually the father of the father" (S.5).

The protector of the universe is no longer felt as 'the other.' So complete is His sway that the aspirant feels that He has entered into himself. This is veritably the acme of knowledge. Knowledge, which makes explicit the unity in multiplicity, finds its consummation here and returns or recoils upon itself. It is in this sense that Aristotle described God as a thinking Theoria. God thinks His own thoughts and remains absorbed in that beatitude. Assimilation with this principle is consequent on the true knowledge of It. The unison dispels the last shred of doubt from a man's mind. "When one realises that all beings exist in Atman and that Atman is in all beings, one does not entertain any kind of doubt whatsoever", asserts the seer with adamantine certainty (S.6). The psychological aspect of getting the spiritual experience and the epistemological aspect of its validity are fused in the immediate conviction of the veracity of the experience.

2. God as *Fons et Origo.* God is realised not only as the only Reality but also as an indwelling spirit of the world. The unborn, the formless, the unmanifest is experienced as taking on variegated names and forms. The knowledge of the *natura naturans* is followed by the knowledge of the *natura naturata*. God is visualised not only as the energising principle but also as the sum-total of all reality. A devotee declares that as long as he was ensconsed in the body,

he was subject to repeated births. But in that very stage he acquired divine knowledge and burst through the bonds like a hawk (S.7). Here is enthusiasm, strengthened by penance; here is a spirit of dignity nurtured by piety and sacrifice. God is seen to be the central thread round which are woven all existences. God is made the harmonising principle. This does not mean that the existences are essentially separate from God. "He who is foremost in propitiating the worshippers by means of Dakṣinā is himself called the seer, or Brahman, or chief worshipper or Sāma-chanter; he knows the three forms of the dazzling one" (S.8). Obviously the three forms are the three bodies — the gross, the subtle and the causal. The vision of oneness of microcosm and macrocosm frees an aspirant from all the three bodies. He is absorbed in the foundational cause or Mahā-kāraṇa, the Cause of causes. "Obeisance to you who prevents us from a fall. We salute your thunder-bolt and your splendour. We know you as having taken lodgement in the cavity of man's heart as also in the navel of the ocean" (S.9). Or again, "Oh Brahman, you asked me whether I am present in the three regions where Viṣṇu is worshipped. My reply is that in all the three places, both you and I are present. I know both the earth and the heaven as well as that which lies beyond" (S.10). Elsewhere all things in the world are said to be 'inside' the Brahman. "I have beheld the greatness of that great Being, immortal amongst the mortals. The jaws of the voracious eater are constantly engaged in devouring, though insatiably, the manifold objects" (S.11). In Brahman which is eternal existence even death finds a place; in fact, here death loses its teeth. Death is a necessary but an unalarming event. And if death itself is accommodated why not deities of evil? Well, they are not excluded. Take the case of the fifty-ninth Sūkta of the tenth Maṇḍala of Ṛgveda. Here the subject-matter of first four Mantras is Nirṛuti! Sāyaṇa regards Nirṛuti as a Pāpa-devatā, seducting one to a life of sin and suffering and ultimately leading one to death. "The devotees worship the three Nirṛutis. Thereafter they realise the fires who are heard far and wide. The mystics know the original source of the Nirṛutis which lies in the supreme and mysterious vault" (S.12). The three evils may refer to three types of afflictions, physical, theological and psychical. "Oh Manyu, who are a giver of victory

like Indra, and are irreproachable, be our protector at this sacrifice. Oh enduring one, we sing your exaltations. We know this to be the source whence you have become mighty" (S.13).

Another side of this unitive experience is to see that the universe is a theophany. The Yajurveda and Atharvaveda join hands in such a kind of description. "God Prajāpati, the Lord of all creation entered into the embryo of all creatures, and though He is an unborn Being, yet He is born many times in various bodily forms. Only mystics see His original real form in which all the worlds are established" (S.14). "The God Prajāpati enters into the embryo of all creatures, then He is invisible. He reveals Himself through bodily forms. He created this entire universe by one part only; the other part constituting all bliss" (S.15). On the whole, God's immanence and His revelation through created objects is a perorative refrain of the post-ecstatic exclamations of the ancient minstrels. Along with the presence and power of God seen in all things, the mystic perceives His benevolence also. Ṛṣi Prajāpati Vaiśvamitra says : "You were always looking to the spiritual welfare of the devotees whereby grand success was guaranteed to them. Be thou our guide. The wise discern the multifarious exploits of Indra who would provide security in a sustained manner" (S.16). The Reality which is experienced within is also experienced without. "Those who realise Brahman in the human body, realise also the Parameṣṭhin. Those who realise Parameṣṭhin and Prajāpati and those who realise the sovereign Brahman, come to realise thereafter the supreme pillar supporting the entire universe" (S.17). Below such weighty and magnificent poems the tide of hope flows strongly.

3. Triumph over Evil. The problem of evil has always been a ticklish one and philosophers have found evil to be an inconvenient guest for whom no place is reserved at the table. It is only the dualists and the pluralists who boldly admit the existence of the twin principles of Good and Evil as real, though the relation between the two is by no means explained by them satisfactorily. The absolutists have branded evil to be only an appearance but it remains a veritable reality on the empirical level. The problem of evil has always been a hard nut to crack, because it is not consistent with either God's

omnipotence or with His benevolence — the two attributes of God none of which a devout theist would surrender. It seems that evil is destined to be a persistent and perpetual problem.

In Ethics, the problem appears under a different guise. Evil is the agreed starting point of morality. In the absence of evil, moral philosophy would be like Don Quixote's battles — fighting without enemies. Moral conquest is nothing but a fight against the principle of evil and as such presupposes evil. The optimistic thinkers have predicted that ultimately evil would fall to pieces and good would rise victorious. "Ten irreligious kings confederated against the devout Sudāsa. But they were not able to overpower him. The prayers of the devotees became fruitful and the truth was ultimately vindicated. Gods appeared at their invocations" (S.18). The battle between the forces of good and the forces of evil is described as a formidable one and is fought with many a powerful weapon. "When Vṛtra and Indra faced each other in a personal encounter, they used all their first-rate weapons; but ultimately Vṛtra fell and was lost in abysmal darkness; and Indra, on account of his inherent greatness, was crowned with success and became the foremost to be worshipped" (S.19). At another place Indra is depicted as fighting with yet another weapon. "Indra, the unrivalled warrior smote down the ninetynine Vṛtras by means of the bones of the sage Dadhīca (S.20). It is well-known that for the destruction of Vṛtra, a special weapon had to be manufactured out of the bones of an extremely pious person and that the sage Dadhīca who answered to the requirements, had to give up his ghost in order to make his bones available for the purpose. We see here how an individual sacrificed himself willingly for universal welfare. No great man remains encapsulated in his own realisation; he works for others. Indra can also be understood as the soul within that fights against innumerable vices with an instrument born out of penance and piety. Indra is by no means a lone fighter; there are many others like him. They are armed with inner discipline and self-culture. "Oh Soma, you too like Indra are endowed with power to do great and valiant deeds. You are the slayer of Vṛtras and demolisher of the fortresses. Like Pedu's horse you extirpated not only Vṛtra but also all the irreligious people" (S.21).

Close on the heels of the destruction of evil forces, arises the feeling of triumph as well as the hope that the victory is ever-lasting. This explains the joyous attitude of the sage Hiraṇyastūpa Āngirasa when he exclaims : "In the battle that ensued between Indra (the human self) and Vṛtra (the encircling evil forces of Satan), the missiles like lightning, thunder, dense mist and heavy down-pour of rain, hurled by Vṛtra did no harm to Indra who ultimately came out victorious" (S.22). This cosmic victory is but an individual victory writ large. The individual victory consists in the realisation of the Atman. This realisation was the golden culmination of the endeavour of Vedic Ṛṣis and was the burden of their prayers. Here is a victory song : "We have become victorious; we have gained trophies. All our enemies have been toppled. So said Agni and so said Soma. Pūṣan has gifted us a habitat in the holy heavens. We have attained to the light of Atman and are united with the gloss of the spiritual sun. We shall acquire more spiritual wealth and glory" (S.23). Another couplet of trophy runs : "I have become victorious. I am now the most exalted and sublime being on this earth. I have uprooted every one on every side. I am the universal sovereign" (S.24). Or again, "Indra has become the grand master. Agni and Soma have also become glorious; of all the majestic beings in the universe I am the foremost" (S.25). Praskaṇva Kāṇva expresses his spiritual victory : "The spiritual sun with all his sparkling vigour has made his appearance subjugating the enemies to my custody. Never shall I be subdued by my foes" (S.26). We read likewise : "Like Indra, I have demolished the ill-wishers without any kind of damage to my person. All of them have been brought down at my feet" (S.27). And again : "I have crushed those snakes in the grass; there is no rival left now to oppose me. I have been ruling hitherto over these beings only. Now, I have become the sovereign of all I survey" (S.28). The Ṛṣi's faith was a rich soil for hope to grow and so he could easily overcome the stresses of the long and cold Arctic night.

Another effect of the realisation of the Atman is that all miseries come to an end. To a Ṛṣi all suffering is a result of the displeasure of the elements whom he had invested with consciousness and with supernatural power. That is why for all sorts of suffering, help from celestial quarters is solicited. We thus read how

the grace of Soma or Sūrya is described as pounding evil to pieces, whether external or internal. "Now be ready with your Soma juice. Fear not; this dark cloud of calamities is a passing phase and will vanish of itself" (S.29). Soma is described at one place as counteracting the fatal effects of poison. "In the beginning a Brahmin with ten heads and ten faces was born. He first drank off Soma juice and thereby made the poison lose its injurious essence" (S.30). Soma takes lodgement in the mind of the devotee and sweeps the ills clean. "Away have fled all those misfortunes and ailments. All the harmful forces have been driven aghast. Soma with his mighty strength has risen high in us and we have now reached a state where men can prolong their life" (S.31). The sun who ousts darkness also disperses catastrophies. "The sun, foremost amongst the luminous bodies, has appeared now, dispelling sin and misery and spreading out illumination in all the quarters" (S.32). Even when a person is blessed with a mere flash of religious experience, he rises superior to the evil mongerings of the mean-minded. The sages were realised souls and could dismiss the foul designs of the mass of ordinary worshippers.

We shall now notice three Mantras which refer to effects of God-realisation that have been termed by Professor R.D. Ranade as moral purification, intellectual clarification and spiritual sanctification. The God-realiser becomes so pure morally that no evil ever contaminates him. "Today we have become victorious; we have obtained whatever was desired. We have become completely free from sin. Oh dawn, your pure light drives away our evil dreams of which we were afraid. Your aids are harmless and immaculate" (S.33). The claim is conveyed in words decked with musical quality. Next comes a Mantra describing intellectual clarification. Only those who realise Atman as filling every nook and cranny of the universe are said to possess superior intellect. "What are the things in whom dwells the highest Atman and what are the things that are included in that Atman? Provide us with the answers to these questions which we ask in order to assess whose intellect is superior. The answer is : The Paramātman fills all the five Prāṇas and in the Paramātman itself are included all sense-organs like the eye and so on. This is the proper reply to your query and it comes

from me having superior intellect" (S.34). Prajāpati asks the questions and himself gives the answers. "From the surface of the earth to the mid-region and from the mid-region to heaven, I ascended; and from heaven I ascended to the blissful self-effulgent light. The wise men who carry on worship of the divine support of this universe, do not in the least entertain any craving for worldly happiness" (S.35). This is spiritual sanctification. The result is a spirit of surrendering oneself to the all-pervading Atman. It is they alone who surrender to Him, body and soul, that can be taken as having an immediate apprehension of Atman. "We rejoice in the eternal region where the gods sacrifice to the immortals with their minds which are themselves immortal. It is in that region again that we behold the light of the sun when he rises. Is there any thing more powerful which can be attained by means of a sacrifice than what was achieved by gods who sacrificed themselves? The ignorant sacrifice by offering a dog; others do it by offering cows. He who sacrifices his mind to God is alone praise-worthy. Let him give us knowledge and render proper advice to us" (S.36).

To a mystic the world seems to be full of beings who shower grace on others. "The sun is going to shower his grace on the region where the devotees are engaged in auspicious activities, proper to holy precincts" (S.37). Desires are fulfilled not by feeding them but by collecting the highest Reality. "Viśvakarman, the great architect who designed the whole universe is endowed with the special faculty of intuitive mind. His greatness is immeasurable. He is the creator, arranger and also the chief supervisor over this universe. The sages say that he is the supreme one beyond the seven Ṛṣis i.e. beyond the seven means of perception. On account of the beatific joy in realising Him, there is fulfilment of all desires" (S.38). The longing for worldly objects comes to be pale and dead. The petty things no more attract the attention of the devotee.

4. Attainment of Bliss. By far the most important effect of mystic vision is the attainment of bliss to which there are innumerable references. In this connection Indra is many times described as discharging the function of guiding travellers on the spiritual path. The sage Vāmadeva Gautama assures : "Verily the mighty God (Bhārvara or Indra) is ever eager to give assistance to

the devotees. His inspiration is secretly present in the heart of the worshipper, bringing clarity to his intellectual perception and prompting him in gaining the bliss of God-realisation" (S.39). God helps those who are actively benevolent. "God imparts knowledge to those who offer sacrifices and who render valuable service to others. He makes them more and even more affluent. He does not hide himself from his admirers. In his own abode he establishes those that desire to attain to divinity" (S.40). In this verse, a very important statement has been made, viz. that God does not hide Himself from his devotees. As Berkeley said : "God concerns Himself very nearly in our affairs; but it is only those who have eyes that can see. Others, though they are surrounded with such clear manifestations of the deity, are yet little affected by them that they seem, as it were, blinded with excess of light." Secondly, we find here in its bare rudiments, the concept of 'Salokatā' or liberation by attaining to the abode of God. The concept played an important role in the later development of Vedāntic thought. Those who are fortunate to have the vision of the highest, enjoy the light and warmth thereof. "The spiritual form of the peerless, bounteous Lord with the invincible fortifications is glorious and auspicious, as if it were the vision of the celestial sun" (S.41). Jñāneśvara has immortalised the vision of the sun by calling it Cit-sūrya — the Sun of Absolute Reality.

In a number of places in the Vedas we read that the aspirants gain a bonanza from Soma. "The invigorating ambrosial juice oozing down into the lateral ventricle of the illumined sages, creates divine light and spiritual delight" (S.42). "The swift and shining Maruts will reach you to a place of sacrifice. They will drink the sweet, joy-giving Soma juice and will create food by sending forth rains" (S.43). The Soma is always praised for such services. In one place we find Bārhaspatya Bharadwāja challenging the beneficence of the acts which Indra performed when exhilerated with the Soma. "What did Indra do when he was intoxicated with Soma? What did he do after he drank it? And after he befriended it? What good did he do to the ancient adorers assembled in the sacrificial hall or to them who have assembled now?" (S.44). The next Mantra provides the answers. The same Bharadwāja after receiving from Indra what he had hankered after, changed his stance. He who had come to scoff

remained to pray. "Whatever Indra did in the exhileration of Soma was auspicious. After partaking of Soma and after aligning with it, he performed beneficent acts. All his fans, past and present, who had assembled in the hall of sacrifice, were gratified" (S.45). Ṛṣi Kaśyapa Mārīca is almost enamoured of the exciting land of Soma and he portrays it in a peculiarly charming and unmatched lyric known as Pavamāna Sūkta. "Oh Pavamāna Soma, where there is unbroken lustre and where there is delightful presence of the spiritual sun, in that land of immortality and fullness, may my seat be reserved. Oh Soma, send forth your flow for the sake of Indra. Where, the son of Vivaswat is ruling, where the source of illumination is hidden, where giant rivers glide along, in that land make me immortal. Oh Soma, send forth your flow for the sake of Indra. Where, in the third heaven, one can move freely, where all the four corners are studded with bright rays, in that land, make me immortal. Oh Soma, send forth your flow for the sake of Indra. Where, the residents perform only disinterested actions, where a fountain of nectar gushes out, where mirth is spread out as a fare, in that land make me immortal. Oh Soma, send forth your flow for the sake of Indra. Where one finds four kinds of fecility — Ānanda, Moda, Muda and Pramoda — where the very desire of desires is fulfilled, in that land make me immortal. Oh Soma, send forth your flow for the sake of Indra" (S.46). The Sūkta ends, but the sweet melody of the words, इन्द्राय इन्दो परि स्रव, continue to ring in the ear.

The devotee is always eager to enjoy the close presence of God. "Make me shine like fire enkindled by friction, brighten our vision, favour us with plenitude; while I am in your soothing proximity, I feel I have won laurels. Pray, allow the Soma to continue and progress here and hereafter" (S.47). One very important ethical problem is touched here. Moral philosophers do not agree whether morality comes to an end after all the wrongs in the world are righted or whether it continues even thereafter. Both sides of the question are represented by heavy-weights. The Vedic Ṛṣi, even after he marches through the arch of fortune does not think that he can, once for all, rest there. He prays for the continued progress in bliss. Even if the struggle for achieving the goal ceases, the march continues.

The point is very succinctly put by A.E. Taylor, "... the winning of heaven would not leave the pilgrim arrived at the end of the journey with nothing further to do. In heaven itself, though there would be no longer progress *towards* fruition, there might well be progress *in* fruition. Life "there" would be, as life "here" is not, living by vision, as contrasted with living by faith and hope; but might not the vision itself be capable of ever-increasing enrichment?"[1] Verily the heaven is the attainment of God. Its tranquil bliss has no limits. The ecstasy of such attainment greets us every now and then in the Vedas. Thus an aspirant addresses Indra: "Highly invigorating is thy boon, most dazzling thy prowess; thereby the evil forces meet their doom and immeasurable strength comes to one's hands" (S.48). The same emphasis on the raptures of God-vision is found frequently. "Oh you Indra of incomparable intellect, your majesty is indicative of your regal status. Be you an enjoyer of that glory. This splendour is cherished by one and all, and it enabled you to eliminate Vṛtra root and branch. It brings good tidings to the devotee; be you ever rejoicing in it" (S.49). Such a gracious fortune automatically expresses itself in post-ecstatic exclamations on the part of the blessed one. "Contemplating upon the rays that emanate from the light eternal, they actually beheld their own spiritual form and were transported with joy and thereupon their thunderous shouts of victory radiated warmth in heaven and earth" (S.50). Maddened by the hilarity of God-vision, the Ṛṣi proclaims; "I am inspired by God Savitṛ. Now with the arms of Aświns and hands of Pūṣan, with Saraswatī's power on my tongue, and under the direction of Prajāpati, I hand over to you the empire of Agni" (S.51).

5. Immortality. It is one of the contradictions of human life that man wishes to be immortal in this mortal world; but who has ever heard of a tale of immortality in the world where the dictates of death are inviolable? Whatever is born is sure to die. In his Farewell Address the Buddha exhorted: "Decay is inherent in all component things. But the Truth will remain for ever. Work out your salvation with diligence." Death is true so far as the frail body is concerned. But when we speak of immortality, it is not bodily

1 The Faith of a Moralist, Series I, P. 408

immortality. When Buddha announced his death, Ānanda implored him: "Vouchsafe Lord, to remain with us for the welfare of the great multitude." The enlightened one said : "Enough now Ānanda,.. beseach not the Tathāgata... why should I preserve this body of flesh when the body of the exalted law (Dharmakāya) will endure?"

The concept of immortality can be understood in different senses. It is a biological phenomenon that man inherits physical or intellectual characteristics from his fore-fathers and passes them on to his children. His genes are carriers of this inheritance. Thus even after his death, a part of him actually continues to live. This is biological immortality. Again, it is well-known that a man is known through his achievements. Works of art and literature, institutions founded and nurtured by him, are a monument to him and he lives through them. This is social immortality. We are here concerned neither with biological, nor with social immortality, but with metaphysical immortality, mystically realised. The fact of identity between self and God is the metaphysical expression of the life eternal. The self is essentially of the nature of God — both being Caitanya — and continues to live in God. This metaphysical fact, however, should not remain an intellectual assertion; a mere reasoned conviction of identity is of no avail; it should be a matter of mystical experience. Needless to say that once there is direct experience of this identity, man knows that he is immortal. Embedded in the frail frame of a mortal, the fire of immortality blazes forth.

The invocation of sage Saucīka Agni is that they be endowed with immortality as well as with brave sons, so that they would be serving gods efficiently. They would be providing Indra with a thunderbolt wherewith he would fight with his foes (S.52). This Mantra perhaps contains a suggestion of biological immortality. Immortality is to be achieved in a variety of ways. The intuitive experience of God, the author of nature, is described as one of the means. "The manifestation of this material form of Gāyatra took place on this basis of the unmanifest Gāyatra-energy of the immortal. The perishable form of Traiṣṭubha was fashioned out of the unmanifest Traiṣṭubha-energy; and the manifestation of this form

of the universe was founded upon the unmanifest energy of the immortal Jagatī. Those who realise this, attain to ever-lasting life" (S.53). Here we see the metaphor of evolution applied to the cosmic processes. Evolution here is to be taken in its strictly etymological sense which "presupposes a fundamental unity, in which all that is eventually evolved or disclosed was involved or contained from the first."[1] He who has experienced that creation is only an unfoldment of divinity, gains immortality. Naturally the highest deity is sought to be pleased. There are a few on whom fortune smiles even without their having traversed the trodden path. We are told that the sage Vāmadeva received illumination while still in the womb of his mother. There itself he tried to know all the births of gods, i.e., the ways by which they attained to knowledge. To Indra's behest that Vāmadeva also follow the same path, the latter gave an emphatic 'no'. He preferred to come out of the travails with the dramatic swiftness of a hawk. Even a hundred citadels would not hold him. Thus in a hymn is exemplified Vāmadeva's sudden illumination (S.54). Service no less than knowledge, is a means to life ever-lasting. Ṛbhus earned the friendship of gods by their remarkable service. Their moral stature too was enhanced. Their works became acceptable to the powerful and lustrous gods. On account of the skill and deftness in performing duties, Vāja became a favourite of gods. Ṛbhukṣas was particularly appreciated by Indra and Vibhvan especially by Varuṇa (S.55). "The Ṛbhus zealously practised penance in the company of venerable seekers. Mortals as they were, these sons of Sudhanvan attained to eternal life. Illumined with the lustre of the sun, they became worthy of homage" (S.56). We clearly see in this lyric a reference to the moral and spiritual effects of the company of the saints. Meditation in the company of pious souls enables a devotee to attain to Holy Will. Though Holy Will is the privilege of God, it can as well, belong to 'just men made perfect'. Association with the great always brings good to man. A cruise in the current of their friendship refreshes him. Deities like Soma, Agni or Yajña are said to be helping an aspirant in getting the fruit of deathlessness. "You, Oh Soma are the accomplisher of sacrifice.

1 James Ward, The Realm of Ends, P. 100

Through you we have attained the ever-glittering light and have crossed over death. From earthly existence, we have risen to the state of illumination; we have realised the gods and also the self-effulgent light" (S.57). What can an adversary do to such souls and what will the crafty guiles of a mortal do to them? Along with Soma, Agni is also described as extending his spiritual hand in gaining immortality. "Oh Agni holding fast to your ageless wings which soar high and which destroy the demons, we fly to that region to which the ancient seers have repaired" (S.58). Here we are reminded of the last words of Shri Amburao Maharaj, one of the great saints of Nimbargi Sampradāya, "I am free from all desires as my highest desire, namely, self-realisation is fulfilled. Like trailing clouds of glory, I will now fly God-ward with the words 'Nārāyaṇa, Narayaṇa on my lips." Morality and meditation constituted the two wings for his flight to the Infinite.

There are also hymns in the Vedas where the sages describe their having gone to the divine exalted realms. They call it Swarga or Dyuloka and speak of it as an abode of bliss and light. It is, however, difficult to understand literally many a phrase, such as travelling in a golden chariot to Indra's abode or going to heaven by holding on to Agni's wings. It is better to understand the concept of places bathed in light as indicating an elevated moral and spiritual state of an aspirant. The light may be symbolic of moral exaltation or of mystical lustre. Bṛahaspati's or Indra's sorrowless and sublime vaults may be indicative of the blissful peace of the seers. "Oh you Indra of beautiful armour, ride your golden chariot. We shall also ride that air-borne chariot which is auspicious, immaculate and majestic and which emits light-rays. We shall then stand by your side. The devotees salute the gods and sit in their vicinity. They persuade the gods to attend their sacrifices. They expect a precious gift from the divinities. Thus Priyamedhas have followed the traditional route and reached the destination of ancient seers" (S.59). The same reference to the higher regions is found in a celebrated passage which is repeated in later literature. We are here told that as dictated by primeval ordinances, devotees worshipped God in a spirit of complete self-surrender. These great men attained to the

highest spiritual state which was reached by the by-gone saints (S.60). We read how an aspirant passes from a profane state to a sacred state. "I shed my earthly nature and became divine. At the time when I refused to participate in your auspicious sacrifice, I was still under the influence of binding self-love" (S.61). What after all is immortality? It is not going from one region to another region; it consists in visualising God everywhere and at all times. The Kingdom of God, it is said, lies within us. Immortality, therefore, is realising god here and now, which is the same thing as abiding in one's own self. It is also rejoicing in the Spirit, says Ṛṣi Bhṛgu (S.62). Finding spiritual treasure in his own self, the aspirant becomes confirmed in immortality.

6. Union with the God-head. For one who has the vision of God everywhere, all duality comes to an end. He becomes a Samadarśī, one who has equality of vision everywhere. There is a feeling of identity with everything. This unitive vision is clearly seen in many a Vedic stanza. "Hail to thee Oh heaven, hail to thee, Oh earth, hail to thee Oh intermediate space. The sun is my eye, the Vayu is my vital force, the intermediate space is my self and the earth is my body. I am he who is known as Amara or the deathless. I am offering my heart and soul in order to be protected by heaven and earth." This is a soliloqy of the sage Brahmā (S.63). Such a seer is credited with the power of creating the world, for he asserts that he has given rise to seasons and seven seas. Another important point which he makes is that the distinction between truth and falsehood no longer holds. He himself utters propositions which a common man dubs true or false; but he stands beyond them (S.64). As with nature so with the various deities he feels to be identical. Thus Rsi Vāmadeva says : "It was I who lived as Manu and also as Sūrya. I am the wise sage, Kakṣīvān. It is I who made Kutsa, the son of Arjuni, very powerful. And I am that wise poet Uśanā. Behold me here. I have bestowed this earth upon Āryas. I have bestowed showers of rain upon the mortal who offers oblations. I have guided the course of the loudly roaring waters. Gods move as per my directions. Exhilerated by the influence of Soma, it is I who razed to the ground ninety-nine fortresses of Śambara altogether. The

hundredth fortress I gave to Divodāsa for his habitation and protected him at his sacrifice" (S.65). Similarly Ṛṣi Vaikuṇṭha Indra says, "I was the first possessor of all this precious wealth of creation; I am its over-lord. All men approach me alone like a son unto his father. I favour my devotees with the enjoyment of bliss. I am Indra, the invincible self. Never was I a prey to death. All devotees approach me for the delicious mellifluous juice. Those who are attached to me in sweet reciprocity of friendship shall never perish" (S.66). This identification with Manu, Sūrya and Indra mentioned above is extended to many other deities; and the aspirant feels that he has achieved great powers also. There are a number of Mantras which describe such powers. "I am the ruler of all the mortal beings as well as the immortal gods. The gods act only as per the dictates of Varuṇa. I am the sovereign of all men and their possessions. I am that sovereign Varuṇa. All the first heavenly powers were gifted only to me. I am Indra, I am Varuṇa, I am this wide earth, this unfathomable firmament and this grand canopy of heaven. I know all beings. I am the impelling force behind all the movements of all creatures of this vast universe. I direct the showers of rain to descend on the earth. It is at my behest that the heavenly bodies move according to the laws of Ṛta and it is I who governs the threefold creation of this universe following the laws of Ṛta," proclaims Ṛṣi Trasadasyu Paurukutsya (S.67). It is worth while noting that the aspirant gradually becomes endowed with the divine attributes of omnipresence and omnipotence.

The mystic now boldly declares that he verily enters into Brahman and becomes all-that-there-is. He merges in the supreme Self and does not remain outside. He also realises that he is the immanent bond in the universe. "Performing various good deeds, he gets some light and then follows the Pathway to God with great vigour. Thereafter he tries to rise higher up and reach the state of bliss; and ultimately he merges his self in the supreme Self" (S.68). The released soul expresses its identity with the sub-human world as well as with the human world" (S.69). And finally, the mystic realises that he is the innermost principle not only of the beings on the earth but also of the gods in the heaven. Thus is confirmed, by first-hand experience, the doctrine of all-pervasiveness of Brahman.

The dictum that all is Brahman can be established by intellectual argument, no doubt; but it becomes significant only when corroborated experientially.

God-realisation irons out whatever imperfections an aspirant may have. He becomes a whole and integrated personality. Once there is realisation of the oneness of existence, altruism follows suit. Being interested in the welfare of all, a saint necessarily engages himself in activities which are beneficial to humanity. "Brahman is the sacrifice; Brahman is the sacrificer; Adhvaryu is born from Brahman; and the oblation is contained in Brahman. Brahman is the sacrificial ladle full of ghee. Brahman is the first principle of sacrifice" (S.70). As Brahman is perfect, so is the saint. "My powers of seeing and hearing are inseparable; my breathing, viz. inhalation and exhalation and my diffusive breath are also inseparable. I am inseparable, an individual whole" (S.71). He possesses things that bestow happiness on mankind. "Agni am I; I have full knowledge of all things ever since my birth. I have illumination in my eyes and immortal ambrosia in my mouth. I am the three-fold vital air and measurer of the mid-region. I am the eternal light and heat and I am also the offered oblations" (S.72).

The God-intoxicated Ṛṣi, Nābhānediṣṭha Mānava declares to the world the supreme bliss of identification with the highest Reality. "This is my navel centre, here is my home; these are my gods. I myself am all. I am the twice-born; I am the first-born of the eternal order" (S.73). "I am the first-born of the Ṛta. I am more ancient than gods; I am the immortal name; he that gives me, keeps me; him, who eats all food, I eat as food" (S.74). The same is repeated in another verse. "I have not consumed the food nor has the food consumed me. The food itself has consumed the food" (S.75). Thus there comes to be one's identity (i) with the supreme spiritual Principle, (ii) with the entire universe and consequently with all entities — living or non-living, conscious or unconscious, moving or non-moving; (iii) there also comes to be identity between the subject and the object as well as the subject-object relation. These are respectively, the psychological, the cosmologico-metaphysical and the epistemological expressions of the self-same identity.

7. Universal Prayer. The two moral ends, according to Kant, are perfection of oneself and happiness of others. We can not strive for others' perfection, contends Kant, for that will be under-estimating their autonomy. The individual himself must strive for his perfection, while others can only promote his happiness. But in the first place, it is a superfluous luxury in moral theory to tell a perfected man to strive for others' happiness. Benevolence is no longer an 'ought' with him; it has become an ever-lasting 'is'. No one ever orders water to find its own level; it is its nature to do so. Secondly, trying to promote others' happiness is to treat them as phenomena in the world of phenomena, i.e. to regard them as wholly and solely under the thumb of sensibility. This certainly is not Kant's idea of man. According to him man is essentially rational and his rationality consists in constantly overcoming sensibility. Thus man is viewed as a noumenon in the world of phenomena. It would therefore be wrong to strive for others' happiness, for in doing so we forget that they belong to a higher plane. When a person is trying to eliminate sensibility and become perfect, why should others instill sensibility in him by making him happy? Therefore there seems to be some theoretical inconsistency in the duality of moral ends prescribed by Kant. Lokamanya Tilak has corrected Kant by saying that perfection of oneself includes perfection of others. On the Advaitic metaphysics, with its concept of the all-pervasiveness of one Brahman, only a *unitary moral end* can be consistent. Thus according to Tilak, man has to strive for perfection, both of himself and of others. Thirdly, we have to remember that though Kant as a moral purist stopped at the *Bonum Supremum* which excluded happiness, Kant as a great humanist had to include happiness in the *Bonum Consummatum.* In his concept of complete good, he allowed happiness, proportional to the amount of virtue. However one has to remember that virtue is not to be practised *for the sake of* happiness; happiness may follow as a result of virtue. This becomes explicit in Plato's idea of justice. Plato knew that left to themselves, the sensibilities will indulge in pleasure and not direct people to the good. Passions, therefore, must always be under the guiding principle of reason; they are not to be eliminated, but controlled and directed. Plato wanted a harmony which is "the beauty and health

of the soul, the supremacy of the divine part in man over the lower impulses."

This is a re-echo of the Vedic ideal of perfection, which allows neither a licentious freedom to the sensibilities nor an ascetic suppression of them. The ancient seers never approved of a bi-section of life into secular and religious. This explains the presence of a good number of petitional prayers in Vedic literature. Behind such a kind of prayer lurks the feeling that the prayer will get for them what they need. Also present are the two feelings that are a counterpart of each other, viz., consciousness of one's creatureliness and God's omnipotence. Our consciousness of ourselves as finite, says Descartes, implies the consciousness of God as infinite. Thus petitional prayers are addressed to this great Giver. Needless to say, the propitiatory element plays its own part in these prayers. "Pure at heart and holy in nature, we engage ourselves in singing applauses of God and remain absorbed in the perennial vision of the spiritual sun" (S.76). Sages of yesteryears who valued a balanced life, wisely gave to earthly matters what belonged to earthly matters and to spiritual matters what belonged to spiritual matters. "Oh God, be you kind to deliver to us the choicest goods — an efficient mind, spiritual eminence, abundant wealth, healthy bodies, sweet speech and fair days", requests the pious Gṛtsamada (S.77). There are poems which extol corporate life. "May all beings look upon me with the eye of a well-wisher. May I look upon all beings with the eye of a well-wisher. May we look on one another with an eye of a well-wisher" (S.78).

Not that the petitional prayer is the only type found here. The Vedic seer has transcended the stage of petty needs. Now his eyes are set on communion with the Highest. Many are the poems which imply this purpose. "Intense spiritual aspiration, the emotional contemplation of an ideal, is a kind of prayer" says J.B. Pratt.[1] Craving for union with the highest Ideal is expressed in the form of a prayer. "May our parents and our fellow-men live in joy and peace. May we attain to dignity and an everlasting mystical vision"

1 The Religious Consciousness, A Psychological Study, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1930, P. 329

(S.79). Cordial relations with higher powers are sought for. "Never be this bond between thee and sage Vimada be loosened, Oh Indra. We are aware of your brotherly feelings. Pray, allow this connection to be soldered fast" (S.80). The perfected saint exudes universal love and good will. His prayer is an expression of benign emotions which spring from him. No distinction between individual welfare and social welfare remains. His altruism is a natural consequence of his equanimous vision. "Let those that are already happy continue to be happy, Oh immortal Indra. Let there not be a shadow of sorrowful sin. Be gracious towards us who are your admirers, and make us sufficiently strong and vigorous" (S.81). An humble and affectionate prayer to Rudra reads : "May all men in the world live in contentment, absolutely free from disease and with minds bending low with righteousness and devotion" (S.82). So powerful is the grip of auspiciousness on the mind of the sage that he wants to sweep the world clean of evil odours — physical, in the shape of pain; psychological, in the form of agony and moral, in the outfit of sin. "May we hear with our ears what is good and auspicious. Oh you adorable ones, may we see with our eyes what is good and auspicious. May we, with firm limbs and a sturdy physique, enjoy the divinely ordained term of life by offering supplications and laudations to you" (S.83). "Uncontaminated by disease, distress and dereliction of duties and stuffed with devout purpose and intuitive power, may we, the human souls be gifted with your ever-rising companionship, Oh Surya, who are the light creative. Let that holy figure remain in our full view" is an exhortation from Saurya Abhitapas (S.84). There are prayers where it is difficult to sift the propitiatory element from the thanks-giving element. These prayers are addressed to various gods who are credited with showering gentle drops of mercy on the pilgrim. "Obeisance to the splendour of the supreme Brahman that sets aglow the shining gods and has been there, even before gods came into existence. The divinities who first beheld the prime light of Brahman, said that a mystic who can set his eyes on that flame, shall be able to control all the shining heavens" (S.85). "Exaltations to Rudra who makes his devotees flawless. Oh Rudra, keep us happy with that benign body of yours, which is calm, which is benedictory, which cures physical pains and

which blunts the thorns of worldly adversities" (S.86).

Having themselves reached the spiritual summit, the only motive of the sage is to help those that are down below. The social aspect of such benevolent desire is the spirit of cooperation. Those that want to reach the other shore should strive with one mind. "Come you, come all of you. Be harmonious in conversation, just as the venerable gods assemble and rejoice in their respective positions" (S.87). The prudent sage insists on not merely the sameness of outward actions but a unity of purpose. Psychological resonance, in their opinion, would automatically result in harmony in action. Thus in the valedictory Mantra of that great epic, Ṛgveda, Ṛṣi Samvanana Āngirasa visualises an Utopian state : "Let all of you have one prayer, let your assembly be cohesive, let your minds and thoughts be one. Now I prescribe a common prayer for all of you and offer a single oblation to Agni on behalf of all of you. Common be your aim, united be your hearts, of one accord be your minds, so that all of you may live together happily and peacefully" (S.88). Here togetherness is piled upon togetherness, symphony upon symphony. Such prayers are the limits of human effort for social solidarity. But the Ṛṣi does not stop at prayers. He is confident that the prayer would come true. "The efficacy of certain public prayers depended on their being offered by the right persons", quoth a psychologist.[1] Not a medicine man, nor a priest is the right person. The right person is he, who has a direct vision of God and who struggles to sow and harvest goodness on the earth. Thus a gracious promise is held out to mankind. "I bless you with a union of hearts and minds. I drive away all feeling of hatred. May you love one another with the same warmth as a cow loves the calf which she has borne. Be not parted. Lead a noble and dignified life. Behave with prudence and care. Moving under a common yoke, thrive you together; employ friendly and sweet language. I will make you all have one aim, and be of one mind, with one leader to follow. Like Devas who have been preserving their immortality, may you ever have a heart full of love at all times" (S.89). The sage wished; he

1 W.D. Selbie, The Psychology of Religion, The Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1924, P. 213

prayed; and he received. The assurance is wonderful indeed, and the sage Atharvan has not forgotten to plant weighty words of practical wisdom in it. Centuries later, many saints gave vent to the same feeling when they declared that they have achieved the end of their life and lived only for the welfare of mankind. In fact the Vedic prayers are minute, yet potent seeds of the tree of love which took roots in different faiths to provide balmy shade to the afflicted souls. The tree is thriving yet.

The final aim of Vedic philosophy is attainment of the highest peace which is the apex of the bliss of Brahman. The Vedas have given to the world a countless number of Śānti-mantras or peace hymns. They may wear a simple garb of honey-decked phrases but therein are couched profound mystical truths. "Let there be peace to the heavens and to the mid-regions as well as to the earth. May waters and herbs and trees gain peace. Let all the inhabitants of the universe be immersed in peace. May Brahman, and may everything partake of peace. Peace unto peace itself. May that peace find its course to this humble devotee" (S.90). But wishing peace to everyone is only verbal expression of peace and not the real silent communion with the Godhead. The saint, therefore prays that even the utterance of the word शांति should cease (शांतिरेव शांतिः) and give way to that living, enveloping and sanctifying पराशांति — the supernal peace.

SOURCES-X

1. अतारिष्म तमसस्पारमस्य प्रति स्तोमं देवयंतो दधानाः।
   पुरुदंसा पुरुतमा पुराजाऽमर्त्या हवते अश्विना गीः।। ऋग्वेद VII.73.1
2. अतारिष्म तमसस्पारमस्योषा उच्छंती वयुना कृणोति।
   श्रिये छंदो न स्मयते विभाती सुप्रतीका सौमनसायाजीगः।। ऋग्वेद I.92.6
3. एते असृग्रमाशवोऽति ह्वरांसि बभ्रवः। सोमा ऋतस्य धारया।। ऋग्वेद IX.63.4

4. ऋचो अक्षरे परमे व्योमन् यस्मिन् देवा अधि विश्वे निषेदुः।
यस्तन्नवेद किमृचा करिष्यति य इत् तद् विदुस् ते इमे समासते।। ऋग्वेद X.164.39

5. स्त्रियः सतीस्ताँ उ मे पुंस आहुःपश्यत् अक्षण्वान् न वि चेत दंधः।
कविर्यः पुत्रः स ईमा चिकेत यस्ता विजानात् स पितुष्पिता सत्।। ऋग्वेद I.164.16

6. यस्तु सर्वाणि भूतान्यात्मन्येवानुपश्यति।
सर्वभूतेषु चात्मानं ततो न वि चिकित्सति।। यजुर्वेद XL.6

7. गर्भे नु सन् अनु एषां अवेदमहं देवानां जनिमानि विश्वा।
शतं मा पुर आयसीररक्षन् अधः श्येनो जवसा निरदीयम्।। ऋग्वेद IV.27.1

8. तमेव ऋषिं तमु ब्रह्माणमाहुर्यज्ञन्यं सामगां उक्थशासम्।
स शुक्रस्य तन्वो वेद तिस्रो यः प्रथमो दक्षिणया रराध।। ऋग्वेद X.107.6

9. प्रवतो नपान्नम एवास्तु तुभ्यं नमस्ते हेतये तपुषे च कृण्मः।
विद्म ते धाम परमं गुहा यत्समुद्रे अन्तर्निहितासि नाभिः।। अथर्ववेद I.13.3

10. अपि तेषु त्रिषु पदेष्वस्मि येषु विश्वं भुवनमा विवेश।
सद्यः पर्येमि पृथिवीमुत द्यामेकेनाङ्गेन दिवो अस्य पृष्ठम्।। यजुर्वेद XXIII.50

11. अपश्यमस्य महतो महित्वममर्त्यस्य मर्त्यासु विक्षु।
नाना हनू विभृते सं भरेते असिन्वती बप्सती भूर्यत्तः।। ऋग्वेद X.79.1

12. तिस्रो देष्ट्राय निर्ऋतीरुपासते दीर्घश्रुतो वि हि जानंति वह्नयः।
तासां नि चिक्युः कवयो निदानं परेषु या गुह्येषु व्रतेषु।। ऋग्वेद X.114.2

13. विजेषकृदिंद्र इवानवब्रवोऽस्माकं मन्यो अधिपा भवेह।
प्रियं ते नाम सहुरे गृणीमसि विद्मा तमुत्सं यत आबभूथ।। ऋग्वेद X.84.5

14. प्रजापतिश्चरति गर्भे अंतरजायमानो बहुधा वि जायते।
तस्य योनिं परि पश्यंति धीरास्तस्मिन् ह तस्थुर्भुवनानि विश्वा।। यजुर्वेद XXXI.19

15. प्रजापतिश्चरति गर्भे अंतरदृश्यमानो बहुधा वि जायते।
अर्धेन विश्वं भुवनं जजान यदस्यार्धं कतमः स॰ केतुः।। अथर्ववेद X.8.13

16. युवं प्रत्नस्य साधथो महो यद् दैवी स्वस्तिः परि णः स्यातम्।
गोपाजिह्वस्य तस्थुषो विरूपा विश्वे पश्यंति मायिनः कृतानि।। ऋग्वेद III.38.9

17. ये पुरुषे ब्रह्म विदुः ते विदुः परमेष्ठिनम्।
यो वेद परमेष्ठिनं यश्च वेद प्रजापतिम्।।
ज्येष्ठं ये ब्राह्मणं विदुः ते स्कंभमनुसं विदुः।। अथर्ववेद X.7.17

18. दश राजानः समिता अयज्यवः सुदासमिन्द्रावरुणा न युयुधुः।
सत्या नृणामद्मसदामुपस्तुतिर्देवा एषामभवन् देवहूतिषु।। ऋग्वेद VII.83.7

19. या वीर्याणि प्रथमानि कर्त्वा महित्वेभिर्यतमानौ समीयतुः।
ध्वान्तं तमोऽव दध्वसे हत इन्द्रो महना पूर्वहूतावपत्यत।। ऋग्वेद X.113.7

20. इन्द्रो दधीचो अस्थभिर्वृत्राण्य प्रतिष्कुतः जघान नवतीर्नव। ऋग्वेद I.84.13

21. इन्द्रो न यो महा कर्माणि चक्रिर्हन्ता वृत्राणामसि सोम पूर्भित्।
पैद्वो न हि त्वमहिनाम्नां हन्ता विश्वस्यासि सोम दस्योः।। ऋग्वेद IX.88.4

22. नास्मै विद्युन्न तन्यतुः सिषेध न यां मिहं अकिरत् ध्रादुनिं च।
इंद्रश्च यत् युयुधाते अहिश्चोतापरीभ्यो मघवा वि जिग्ये।। ऋग्वेद I.32.13

23. जितमस्माकमुद्भिन्नमस्माकमभ्यष्ठां विश्वाः पृतना अरातीः।
तदग्निराह तदु सोम आह पूषा मा धात् सुकृतस्य लोके।।
अगन्म स्वः स्वरगन्म सं सूर्यस्य ज्योतिषागन्म।
वस्योभूयाय वसुमान्यज्ञो वसु वंशिषीय वसुमान् भूयासं वसु मयि धेहि।।
अथर्ववेद XVI.9.1-4

24. अहमस्मि सहमान उत्तरो नाम भूम्याम्।
अभीषाडस्मि विश्वाषाडाशामाशां विषासहिः।। अथर्ववेद XII.1.54

25. यशा इंद्रो यशा अग्निर्यशाः सोमो अजायत।
यशा विश्वस्य भूतस्याहमस्मि यशस्तमः।। अथर्ववेद VI.39.3

26. उदगात् अयमादित्यो विश्वेन सहसा सह।
द्विषंतं मह्यं रन्धयन् मो अहं द्विषते रधम्।। ऋग्वेद I.50.13

27. अहमस्मि सपत्नहेंद्र इवारिष्टो अक्षतः।
अधः सपत्ना मे पदोरिमे सर्वे अभिष्ठिताः।। ऋग्वेद X.166.2

28. असपत्नः सपत्नहा ऽ भिराष्ट्रो विषासहिः।
यथाहमेषां भूतानां विराजानि जनस्य च।। ऋग्वेद X.174.5

29. सोम इत् वः सुतो अस्तु कलयो मा बिभीतन।
अपेदेष ध्वस्मायति स्वयं घैषो अपायति।। ऋग्वेद VIII.66.15

30. ब्राह्मणो जज्ञे प्रथमो दशशीर्षो दशास्यः।
स सोमं प्रथमः पपौ स चकारारसं विषम्।। अथर्ववेद IV.6.12

31. अप त्या अस्थुरनिरा अमीवा निरत्रसन् तमिषीचीरभैषुः।
आ सोमो अस्माँ अरुहत् विहाया अगन्म यत्र प्रतिरंत आयुः।। ऋग्वेद VIII.48.11

32. चित्रं देवानां केतुरनीकं ज्योतिष्मान्प्रदिशः सूर्य उद्यन्।
दिवाकरोऽति द्युम्नैस्तमांसि विश्वातारीदुरितानि शुक्रः।। अथर्ववेद XIII.2.34

33. अजैष्माद्यासनाम चाभूमानागसो वयम्।
उषो यस्माद् दुष्ष्वप्न्यादभैष्माप तदुच्छत्वनेहसो व ऊतयः सुऊतयो व ऊतयः।।
ऋग्वेद VIII.47.18

34. केष्वंतः पुरुष आ विवेश कान्यंतः पुरुषे अर्पितानि।
एतद्ब्रह्मन्नुप वल्हामसि त्वा किंस्वित् नः प्रति वोचास्यत्र।।

पंचस्वंतः पुरुष आ विवेश तान्यंतः पुरुषे अर्पितानि।
एतत्त्वात्र प्रतिमन्वानो अस्मि न मायया भवस्युत्तरो मत्।। यजुर्वेद XXIII.51-52

35. पृथिव्या अहमुदंतरिक्षं आरुहम् अंतरिक्षात् दिवं आरुहम्।
दिवो नाकस्य पृष्ठात् स्वर्ज्योतिरगामहम्।।

स्वर्यंतो नापेक्षंत आद्यां रोहंति रोदसी।
यज्ञं ये विश्वतोधारं सुविद्वांसो वितेनिरे।। यजुर्वेद XVII.67-68

36. यद्देवा देवान् हविषा यजंतामर्त्यान् मनसा मर्त्येन।
मदेम तत्र परमे व्योमन् पश्येम तदुदितौ सूर्यस्य।।

यत् पुरुषेण हविषा यज्ञं देवा अतन्वत।
अस्ति नु तस्मादोजीयो यद्विहव्येनेजिरे।।

मुग्धा देवा उत शुनायजंतोत गोरंगैः पुरुधायजंत।
य इमं यज्ञं मनसा चिकेत प्र णो वोचस्तमिहेह ब्रवः।। अथर्ववेद VII.5.3-5

37. सूर्यो देवीमुषसं रोचमानां मर्यो न योषामभ्येति पश्चात्।
यत्रा नरो देवयन्तो युगानि वितन्वते प्रति भद्राय भद्रम्।। ऋग्वेद I.115.2

38. विश्वकर्मा विमना आद्विहाया धाता विधाता परमोत संदृक्।
तेषामिष्टानि समिषा मदंति यत्रा सप्तऋषीन् पर एकमाहुः।। ऋग्वेद X.82.2

39. सत्रा यदीं भार्वरस्य वृष्णः सिषक्ति शुष्मः स्तुवते भराय।
गुहा यदीं औशिजस्य गोहे प्र यद् धिये प्रायसे मदाय।। ऋग्वेद IV.21.7

40. इन्द्रो यज्वने पृणते च शिक्षत्युपेद् ददाति न स्वं मुषायति।
भूयोभूयो रयिमिदस्य वर्धयन्नभिन्ने खिल्ये न दधाति देवयुम्।। ऋग्वेद VI.28.2

41. पदं देवस्य मीळ्हुषो ऽ नाधृष्टाभिरूतिभिः।
भद्रा सूर्य इवोपदृक्।। ऋग्वेद VIII.102.15

42. अभि सोमास आयवः पवन्ते मद्यं मदम्।
समुद्रस्याधि विष्टपि मनीषिणो मत्सरासः स्वर्विदः।। ऋग्वेद IX.107.14

43. यदी वहंति आशवो भ्राजमाना रथेष्वा।
पिबंतो मदिरं मधु तत्र श्रवांसि कृण्वते।। सामवेद 356

44. किमस्य मदे किम्वस्य पीताविंद्रः किमस्य सख्ये चकार।
रणा वा ये निषदि किं ते अस्य पुरा विविद्रे किमु नूतनासः।। ऋग्वेद VI.27.1

45. सदस्य मदे सद्वस्य पीताविंद्रः सदस्य सख्ये चकार।
रणा वा ये निषदि सत् ते अस्य पुरा विविद्रे सदु नूतनासः।। ऋग्वेद VI.27.2

46. यत्र ज्योतिरजस्रं यस्मिन् लोके स्वर्हितम्।
तस्मिन् मां धेहि पवमानामृते लोके अक्षित इंद्रायेंदो, परि स्रव।।

यत्र राजा वैवस्वतो यत्रावरोधनं दिवः।
यत्रामूर्यह्वतीरापस्तत्र माममृतं कृधींद्रायेंदो परि स्रव।।

यत्रानुकामं चरणं त्रिनाके त्रिदिवे दिवः।
लोका यत्र ज्योतिष्मंतस्तत्र माममृतं कृधीद्रायेंदो परि स्रव।।

यत्र कामा निकामाश्च यत्र ब्रध्नस्य विष्टपम्।
स्वधा च यत्र तृप्तिश्च तत्र माममृतं कृधींद्रायेंदो परि स्रव।।

यत्रानंदाश्च मोदाश्च मुदः प्रमुद आसते।
कामस्य यत्राप्ताः कामास्तत्र माममृतं कृधींद्रायेंदो परि स्रव।। ऋग्वेद IX.113.7-11

47. अग्निं न मा मथितं सं दिदीपः प्र चक्षय कृणुहि वस्य सो नः।
अथा हि ते मंद आ सोम मन्ये रेवाँ इव प्र चरा पुटिमच्छ।। ऋग्वेद VIII.48.6

48. शुष्मिन्तमो हि ते मदो द्युम्निन्तम उत क्रतुः।
वृत्रघ्ना वरिवोविदा मंसीष्ठा अश्वसातमः।। ऋग्वेद I.175.5

49. यस्ते नूनं शतक्रतविन्द्र द्युम्नितमोमदः। तेन नूनं मदे मदेः।।
यस्ते चित्रश्रवस्तमो य इन्द्र वृत्रहन्तमः। य ओजोदातमो मदः।। ऋग्वेद VIII.92.16, 17

50. संपश्यमाना अमदन्नभि स्वं पयः प्रत्नस्य रेतसो दुघानाः।
वि रोदसी अतपद् घोष एषां जाते निःष्ठामदधुर्गोषु वीरान्।। ऋग्वेद III.31.10

51. देवस्य त्वा सवितुः प्रसवेऽश्विनो ऽ र्बाहुभ्यां पूष्णो हस्ताभ्याम्।
सरस्वत्यै वाचो यन्तुर्यन्त्रेणाग्नेः साम्राज्ये नाभिषिञ्चामि।। यजुर्वेद XVIII.37

52. आ वो यक्ष्यमृतत्वं सुवीरं यथा वो देवा वरिवः कराणि।
आ बाह्वोर्वज्रमिंद्रस्य धेयामथेमा विश्वाः पृतना जयाति।। ऋग्वेद X.52.5

53. यद् गायत्रे अधि गायत्रमाहितं त्रैष्टुभाद् वा त्रैष्टुभं निरतक्षत।
यद् वा जगज्जगत्याहितं पदं य इत् तद्विदुस्ते अमृतत्वमानशुः।। ऋग्वेद I.164.23

54. अयं पन्था अनुवित्तः पुराणो यतो देवा उदजायन्त विश्वे।
अतश्चिदा जनिषीष्ट प्रवृद्धो मा मातरममुया पत्रवे कः।।

नाहमतो निरया दुर्गहैतत् तिरश्चता पार्श्वान्निर्गमाणि।
बहूनि मे अकृता कर्त्वानि युध्यै त्वेन सं त्वेन पृच्छै।। ऋग्वेद IV.18.1, 2

55. यदारमक्रन्नृभवः पितृभ्यां परिविष्टी वेषणा दंसनाभिः।
आदिद् देवानामुप सख्यमायन् धीरासः पुष्टिमवहन् मनायै।।

अपो ह्येषामजुषन्त देवा अभि क्रत्वा मनसा दीध्यानाः।।
वाजो देवानामभवत् सुकर्मेन्द्रस्य ऋभुक्षा वरुणस्य विभ्वा।। ऋग्वेद IV.33.2, 9

56. विष्ट्वी शमी तरणीत्वेन वाघतः मर्तासः संतो अमृतत्वमानशुः।
सौधन्वना ऋभवः सूरचक्षसः संवत्सरे समपृच्यंत धीतिभिः।। ऋग्वेद I.110.4

57. सत्रस्य ऋद्विरसि अगन्म ज्योतिः अमृता अभूम।
दिवं पृथिव्या अध्यऽरुहामाविदाम देवान् त्स्वर्ज्योतिः।। यजुर्वेद VIII.52

58. इमौ ते पक्षावजरौ पतत्रिणौ याभ्यां रक्षां स्यपहंस्यग्ने।
ताभ्यां पतेम सुकृतामु लोकं यत्र ऋषयो जग्मुः प्रथमजाः पुराणाः।। यजुर्वेद XVIII.52

59. आ तू सुशिप्र दंपते रथं तिष्ठा हिरण्ययम्।
अध द्युक्षं सचेवहि सहस्रपादमरुषं स्वस्तिगामनेहसम्।।

तं घेमित्था नमस्विन उप स्वराजमासते।
अर्थ चिदस्य सुधितं यदेतव आवर्तयंति दावने।

अनु प्रत्नस्यौकसः प्रियमेधास एषाम्।
पूर्वामनु प्रयतिं वृक्तबर्हिषो हितप्रयस आशत।। ऋग्वेद VIII.69.16-18

60. यज्ञेन यज्ञमयजंत देवास्तानि धर्माणि प्रथमान्यासन्।
ते ह नाकं महिमानः सचंत यत्र पूर्वे साध्याःसंति देवाः।। ऋग्वेद I.164.50

61. अदेवाद्देवः प्रचता गुहा यन् प्रपश्यमानो अमृतत्वमेमि।
शिवं यत् सन्तमशिवो जहामि स्वात् सख्यादरणीं नाभिमेमि।। ऋग्वेद X.124.2

62. एतं सधस्थाः परि वो ददामि यं शेवधिमावहात् जातवेदाः।
अन्वागंता यजमानः स्वस्ति तं स्म जानीत परमे व्योमन्।।

जानीत स्मैनं परमे व्योमन् देवाः सधस्था विद लोकमत्र।
अन्वागंता यजमानः स्वस्तीष्टापूर्तं स्म कृणुताविरस्मै।।

देवाः पितरः पितरो देवाः। यो अस्मि सो अस्मि।।
स पचामि स ददामि स यजे स दत्तान्मा यूपम्।।

नाके राजन् प्रति तिष्ठ तत्रैतत् प्रति तिष्ठतु।
विद्धि पूर्तस्य नो राजन् त्स देव सुमना भव।। अथर्ववेद VI.123.1-5

63. दिवे स्वाहा। पृथिव्यै स्वाहा। अंतरिक्षाय स्वाहा।
अंतरिक्षाय स्वाहा। दिवे स्वाहा। पृथिव्यै स्वाहा।

सूर्यो मे चक्षुर्वातः प्राणोन्तरिक्षमात्मा पृथिवी शरीरम्।
अस्तृतो नामाहमयमस्मि स आत्मानं नि दधे द्यावापृथिवीभ्यां गोपीथाय।।
अथर्ववेद V.9.1-7

64. अहं विवेच पृथिवीमुत द्यामहमृतूंरजनयं सप्त साकम्।
अहं सत्यमनृतं यद्वदाम्यहं दैवीं परि वाचं विशश्च।।

अहं जजान पृथिवीमुत द्यामहमृतूंरजनयं सप्त सिंधून्।
अहं सत्यमनृतं यद्वदामि यो अग्नीषोमाव जुषे सखाया।। अथर्ववेद VI.61.2,

65. अहं मनुरभवं सूर्यश्चाहं कक्षीवान् ऋषिरस्मि विप्रः।
अहं कुत्समार्जुनेयं नृञ्जे ऽहं कविरुशना पश्यता मा।।

अहं भूमिं अददां आर्यायाहं वृष्टिं दाशुषे मर्त्याय।
अहमपो अनयं वावशाना मम देवासो अनु केतमायन्।।

अहं पुरो मंदसानो व्यैरं नव साकं नवतीः शंबरस्य।
शततमं वेश्यं सर्वताता दिवोदासं अतिथिग्वं यदावम्।। ऋग्वेद IV.26.1-3

66. अहं भुवं वसुनः पूर्व्यस्पतिरहं धनानि सं जयामि शश्वतः।
मां हवंते पितरं न जंतवो अहं दाशुषे वि भजामि भोजनम्।।

अहमिंद्रो न परा जिग्यः इद्धनं न मृत्यवे अव तस्थे कदा चन।
सोममिन्मा सुन्वंतो याचता वसु न मे पूरवः सख्ये रिषाथन।। ऋग्वेद X.48.1, 5

67. मम द्विता राष्ट्रं क्षत्रियस्य विश्वायोर्विश्वे अमृता यथा नः।
क्रतुं सचंते वरुणस्य देवा राजामि कृष्टेरुपमस्य वव्रेः।।

अहं राजा वरुणो मह्यं तान्यसुर्याणि प्रथमा धारयंत।
क्रतुं सचंते वरुणस्य देवा राजामि कृष्टेरुपमस्य वव्रेः।।

अहमिंद्रो वरुणस्ते महित्वोर्वी गभीरे रजसी सुमेके।
त्वष्टेव विश्वा भुवनानि विद्वान् त्समैरयं रोदसी धारयं च।।

अहमपो अपिन्वमुक्षमाणा धारयं दिवं सदन ऋतस्य।
ऋतेन पुत्रो अदितेर्ऋतावोतत्रिधातु प्रथयद् वि भूम।। ऋग्वेद IV.42.1-4

68. अया विष्ठा जनयन् कर्वराणि स हि घृणिरुरुर्वराय गातुः।
स प्रत्युदैद्धरुणं मध्वो अग्रं स्वया तन्वाऽतन्वऽमैरयत।। अथर्ववेद VII.3.1

69. सं यद्वयं यवसादो जनानामहं यवाद उर्वज्रे अंतः।
अत्रा युक्तो ऽ वसातारमिच्छादथो अयुक्तं युनजद्भवन्वान्।। ऋग्वेद X.27.9

70. ब्रह्म होता ब्रह्म यज्ञा ब्रह्मणा स्वरवो मिताः।
अध्वर्युर्ब्रह्मणो जातो ब्रह्महितं हविः।।

ब्रह्म सुचो घृतवतीर्ब्रह्मणा वेदिरुद्धिता।
ब्रह्म यज्ञस्य तत्त्वं च ऋत्विजो ये हविष्कृतः शमिताय स्वाहा।।
अथर्ववेद XIX.42.1, 2

71. अयुतोऽहमयुतो म आत्मायुतं मे चक्षुरयुतं मे श्रोत्रमयुतो।
मे प्राणो ऽ युतो मेऽपानोऽयुतो मे व्यानोऽयुतोहं सर्वः।। अथर्ववेद XIX.51.1

72. अग्निरस्मि जन्मना जातवेदा घृतं मे चक्षुरमृतं म आसन्।
अर्कस्त्रिधातू रजसो विमानो अजस्त्रो घर्मो हविरस्मिनाम।। ऋग्वेद III.26.7

73. इयं मे नाभिरिह मे सधस्थमिमे मे देवा अयमस्मि सर्वः।
द्विजा अहं प्रथमजा ऋतस्येदं धेनुरदुहज्ज्यायमाना।। ऋग्वेद X.61.19

74. अहमस्मि प्रथमजा ऋतस्य पूर्वं देवेभ्यो अमृतस्य नाम।
यो मा ददाति स इदेवमावदहमन्नमन्नमदन्तमद्मि।। सामवेद 594

75. नैवाहमोदनं न मामोदनः।।
ओदनः एव ओदनं प्राशीत्।। अथर्ववेद XI.3.30, 31

76. वैश्वानरीं वर्चस आ रभध्वं शुद्धा भवंतः शुचयः पावकाः।
इहेडया सधमादं मदंतो ज्योक् पश्येम सूर्यमुच्चरंतम्।। अथर्ववेद VI.62.3

77. इंद्र श्रेष्ठानि द्रविणानि धेहि चित्तिं दक्षस्य सुभगत्वमस्मे।
पोषं रयीणामरिष्टिं तनूनां स्वाद्मानं वाचः सुदिनत्वमह्नाम्।। ऋग्वेद II.21.6

78. दृते दृंह मा मित्रस्य मा चक्षुषा सर्वाणि भूतानि समीक्षन्ताम्।
मित्रस्याहं चक्षुषा सर्वाणि भूतानि समीक्षे मित्रस्य चक्षुषा समीक्षामहे।।
यजुर्वेद XXXVI.18

79. स्वस्ति मात्र उत पित्रे नो अस्तु स्वस्ति गोभ्यो जगते पुरुषेभ्यः।
विश्वं सुभूतं सुविदत्रं नो अस्तु ज्योगेव दृशेम सूर्यम्।। अथर्ववेद I.31.4

80. माकिर्न एना सख्या वि यौषुस्तवचेंद्र विमदस्य च ऋषेः।
विद्मा हि ते प्रमतिं देवजामिवदस्मे ते संतु सख्या शिवानि।। ऋग्वेद X.23.7

81. ये चाकनंत चाकनंत नू ते मर्ता अमृत मो ते अंह आरन्।
वावंधि यज्यूँरुत तेषु धेह्योजो जनेषु येषु ते स्याम।। ऋग्वेद V.31.13

82. शिवेन वचसा त्वा गिरिशाच्छा वदामसि।
यथा नः सर्वमित् जगत् अयक्ष्मं सुमना असत्।। यजुर्वेद XVI.4

83. भद्रं कर्णेभिः शृणुयाम देवाः भद्रं पश्येमाक्षभिः यजत्राः।
स्थिरैरंगैः तुष्टुवांसस्तनूभिः व्यशेम देवहितं यदायुः।। ऋग्वेद I.89.8

84. विश्वाहा त्वा सुमनसः सुचक्षसः प्रजावंतो अनमीवा अनागसः।
उद्यंतं त्वा मित्रमहो दिवेदिवे ज्योग् जीवाः प्रति पश्येम सूर्य।।

महि ज्योतिर्बिभ्रतं त्वा विचक्षण भास्वंतं चक्षुषेचक्षुषे मयः।
आरोहंतं बृहतः पाजसस्परि वयं जीवाः प्रति पश्येम सूर्य।। ऋग्वेद X.37.7, 8

85. यो देवेभ्यः आतपति यो देवानां पुरोहितः।
पूर्वो यो देवेभ्यो जातो नमो रुचाय ब्राह्मये।।

रुचं ब्राह्मं जनयंतो देवा अग्रे तदब्रुवन्।
यस्त्वैवं ब्राह्मणो विद्यात् तस्य देवा असन् वशे।। यजुर्वेद XXXI.20, 21

86. या ते रुद्र शिवा तनूः शिवा विश्वाहा भेषजी।
शिवा रुतस्य भेषजी तया नो मृडजीवसे।। यजुर्वेद XVI., 49

87. सं गच्छध्वं सं वदध्वं सं वो मनांसि जानताम्।
देवा भागे यथापूर्वे संजानाना उपासते।। ऋग्वेद X.191.2

88. समानो मंत्रः समितिः समानी समानं मनः सह चित्तमेषाम्।
समानं मंत्रमभि मंत्रये वः समानेन वो हविषा जुहोमि।।

समानी व आकूतिः समाना हृदयानि वः।
समानमस्तु वो मनो यथा वः सुसहासति।। ऋग्वेद X.191.3, 4

89. सहृदयं सांमनस्यमविद्वेषं कृणोमि वः।
अन्यो अन्यमभि हर्यत वत्सं जातमिवाघ्न्या।।

ज्यायस्वंतश्चित्तिनो मा वि यौष्ट संराधयंतः सधुराश्चरंतः।
अन्यो अन्यस्मै वल्गु वदंत एत सध्रीचीनान्वः संमनसस्कृणोमि।।

सध्रीचीनान्वः संमनसस्कृणोमि एकश्नुष्टीन् त्संवननेन सर्वान्।
देवा इवामृतं रक्षमाणाः सायंप्रातः सौमनसो वो अस्तु।। अथर्ववेद III.30.1, 5, 7

90. द्यौः शान्तिरन्तरिक्षं शान्तिः पृथिवी शान्तिरापः शान्तिरोषधयः शान्तिः।
वनस्पतयः शान्तिर्विश्वे देवाः शान्तिर्ब्रह्म शान्तिः सर्वं शान्तिः शान्तिरेव
शान्तिः सा मा शान्तिरेधि।। यजुर्वेद XXXVI.17

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Long long ago the sages of India kindled beacon-lights on the spiritual path that are still shining. By meditation on the name of God the Ṛsis had attained to Almighty. The four Vedas contain Mantras which express the mystical experiences of the seers. The hymns are eminently hummable as they have wings of music. But more important is their spiritual core. The message of individual salvaion and welfare of the entire human race, is rich in instruction. The Vedic selections in this volume depict stages of a pilgrim's progress towards Divinity. The Vedic Mantras have been arranged topic-wise and treated from the twin angles of Psychology and Philosophy of Religion. Here we see a Pathway to God as reflected in the immortal psalms of the Ṛsis.